



IN THE HEARTS OF MEN

MEN CHANGING LIVES



Nic Fine and
Des van Niekerk

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book describes the philosophy and approach of Hearts of Men, an organisation with fourteen years of programme delivery experience, working in communities with men, young men and their families. “Our endeavours must be about ‘the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man, and the liberty of the child’.”

– Nelson Mandela quoting from the poet Ingrid Jonker

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Men changing lives**

BY NIC FINE AND DES VAN NIEKERK

Cape Town, South Africa
2015

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IN THE HEARTS OF MEN

In the Hearts of Men – in the hearts of men
Something's burning in the hearts of men

In the hearts of men – in the hearts of men
Something's cooking in the hearts of men

In the hearts of men – in the hearts of men
Love is turning in the hearts of men

In the hearts of men – in the hearts of men
Hope is growing in the hearts of men

In the hearts of men – in the hearts of men
A spirit is soaring in the hearts of men

In the hearts of men – in the hearts of men
Something's burning in the hearts of men

– a Hearts of Men song

FOREWORD

Dear Reader

South African families today are generally challenged on all levels, be it structurally, financially, emotionally or physically. Some of these challenges are rooted in our history. As a nation, we are often described globally as one of the most violent societies. However, we cannot proceed into the future by blaming or living in the past, by not taking responsibility for our present and ultimately, our future.

The family should be considered the cornerstone of our communities, which form the very basis of our society. Many families are broken for numerous reasons. It is within this context that every one of us should contribute toward the healing of these families, which consist of individuals who are yearning to be healed, uplifted, empowered, mentored and supported by means of interventions, such as those offered by Hearts of Men. This work contributes to nation-building, by strengthening individuals and families first.

The book you are about to read has been compiled from the two authors' vast knowledge, experience, expertise, passion and commitment to healing lives, building relationships, promoting positive change, encouraging personal transition and transferring skills in the arena of men's work.

Nic Fine and Des van Niekerk have together managed very eloquently to document the work of Hearts of Men from 2001 to 2014, and informed by their many years of experience working in youth and community development.

This book is an absolute must read for anyone, be it a father, son, mother, daughter, educator, facilitator, social worker, psychotherapist or anyone simply interested in transforming their relationships toward positive change. Anyone will benefit by reading and applying the principles contained in this book.

As a social worker with a special interest in Parenting, Families and Youth Development, I have certainly enjoyed reading it and I will be investing in purchasing a copy for myself and my family, as I believe I will be able to draw many positive learnings from this work, in order to enhance my interpersonal

relationships.

Furthermore, I enjoyed the conversational tone in which the book is written as it captured my attention. It speaks to any human soul, big or small, old or young, male or female, professional or layperson.

Fairoza Brey

Cape Town – December 2014

Fairoza Brey is currently Chairperson of the Hearts of Men Board.

She has a Masters in Social Work from the University of the Western Cape (UWC), a Psychology Honours degree plus a Certificate in Dealing with Problem Behaviour in Children from UNISA, and a Diploma in Management Development from Damelin College.

Fairoza is a registered social worker and has 25 years work experience with Youth Development, Youth at Risk and Youth Diversion programmes. She is a facilitator and trainer of Life Skills and Parenting skills interventions.

She is currently lecturing at UWC on the Extended Curriculum Programme, a five-year Social Work course, and is Chairperson of the Diversion Quality Assurance Panel for the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape.

Fairoza is currently a PhD candidate at UWC in Social Work focusing on reconstituted families.

INTRODUCTION

The background to this book

Hearts of Men has been facilitating programmes and community-based interventions in the Western Cape for 14 years from 2001 to 2014. Our two key focus areas have been to close the generational communication gap between older men and young men and boys, as well as to actively engage with men in their roles as fathers to their own children, and as mentors to other young men.

We first developed a Manhood Mentoring community-based programme, in which a group of older men (over 25 years) would go through an intensive and rigorous personal development and mentorship training, followed by a group of younger men (14 to 19 years) who would undergo training. The two groups would then enter into a mentorship agreement lasting a minimum of one year.

This model was then developed further to create a Fatherhood Mentoring programme based on the same principles. Older fathers would now mentor younger fathers within a community-based setting.

Recently work has begun on the development of a Hearts of Women programme. The aim here has been to seek ways in which one can integrate men's and women's work, especially when it comes to strengthening the family.

Hearts of Men has delivered programme interventions in the following neighbourhoods and communities in the Western Cape province, (both urban and rural): Bonteheuwel (Netreg, Blue Gum and Kalksteenfontein), South Peninsula (Ottery East, Lotus River, Grassy Park, Kenilworth), Helderberg (Strand, Macassar, Sir Lowry's Pass, Eerste River), Overberg (Grabouw, Villiersdorp, Monteith Farms, Vyeboom farming community) and Langeberg (Bonnievale, Ashton, Robertson, Graham Beck Farms, Montagu).

Partnership programmes have also been facilitated in the Unicity of Cape Town (Warriors for Peace – Direct Action Centre, Ma'Afrika Tikkun, The Trauma Centre and the Medical Research Council). Hearts of Men

community-based interventions have spanned periods of one year, three years, to 10 years.

Hearts of Men has had funding partnerships with local and provincial government departments, as well as the private sector and charitable foundations.

A shift in focus

Hearts of Men has been primarily a service delivery organisation. The advantage of this is that we have accumulated experience and knowledge, and we have developed effective tools and strategies.

For expansion purposes, we moved from an approach whereby Hearts of Men staff facilitated programmes within their own communities, to a funder-driven approach whereby staff had to be deployed to outside communities spread far and wide. This shift in approach was funder-driven, dictated by a government department's delivery agenda, a client's specific need, or a funder's brief.

Delivering these programmes has taken up all Hearts of Men resources, both financially and time-wise. Much energy has gone into contracting and managing staff, report-writing, managing budgets, vehicles and equipment. The issue of programme sustainability, with length of contract and funding limits as determining factors, has also proved a huge challenge.

Very little to no energy was left for proper research, training, networking, strategic planning, programme and resources development and so forth.

Hearts of Men has had to face all the normal challenges one would expect in having to run an organisation. The pressures in coordinating a delivery team spread sometimes over three regions, working to outside determined deliverables, and staff having to travel regularly and be away from their homes and families, have been formidable.

Reflection, evaluation, research, resource development, training, strategising time have been missing in Hearts of Men.

At the end of 2013 Hearts of Men decided to shift its focus from programme delivery to resource development and training, in order to support other individuals, organisations and communities in taking up this work.

The focus of this book

Men's issues and challenges are at this time gaining prominence on the national agenda. Domestic based violence, the crisis with prison-overcrowding, violence, addiction and crime are all very much in the public debate. Absent fathers, marital breakdown and the effect this has on family relationships and children, are also receiving much attention.

After 14 years of practical field experience, it is now an appropriate time for Hearts of Men to share its methodology and approach in working with men and young men in a community setting. Publishing this book also fits with our shift in focus from delivery to resource development and training others.

This book attempts to answer several of the frequently asked questions:

Why do you focus on men and young men?

Do you leave women completely out of the picture?

What do you actually do with men?

How do you know if your programmes actually make any difference?

How do you select and recruit men into your programmes?

Can anything be done to break the cycle of violence?

Surely you have to change the circumstances first, before you can expect to see individuals change?

Who is this book for?

This book is intended as a resource for anyone working with young people in challenging circumstances. Many say that all young people today are at risk: as moving from childhood, through teenage-hood to adulthood, is a journey full of challenges, risks and dangers.

This book is also aimed at those who are already working with, or intending to work with men and young men, especially with the aim of setting up community-based mentorship support programmes.

This book will hopefully be useful to those working with families, in the hope of strengthening relationships and parenting, and also to those working within community-building and safety initiatives.

We hope this work will also be of practical benefit to those studying social work, community and youth development, psychology and gender studies.

We also hope this work will be received as a contribution in our combined struggle to bring about a better and safer world for women and children, and indeed for men themselves. Turning men back towards their homes, their families and their children, nurturing a culture of respect and responsibility, is ultimately aimed at benefitting us all, both women and men.

Although this work focuses on working with men, a tremendous amount of the methodologies and structures described, can be applied and/or adapted to working with women, and establishing mentorship support programmes for young women.

How the book is structured

This book mirrors the structure of the human heart with its four different chambers. This book is structured into four parts with four chapters in each.

@ In the first part of the book we focus on our core business; Why we do what we do; our focus on working with men and young men.

@ In the second part we focus on what we do; the content of our work, our methodology, including training, mentoring and programme design.

@ In the third part we focus on strengthening the work; working with women, families, communities and strategic partners.

@ In the fourth and final part we focus on sustaining and developing the work; including working with facilitators, funders, leadership and evaluation.

@ In the conclusion, we reflect on our key learning, the challenges we face, and possible future directions.

@ There are a series of appendices at the back of the book which include: communities, schools and organisations with whom Hearts of Men has worked; Hearts of Men staff and key volunteers who have contributed to our work; special acknowledgements, a reading reference list, and finally Hearts of Men contact details.

This book is not a training manual. It aims to give a general overview, the

broad brushstrokes, of our work.

For further detailed information and specific programme content, you would need to refer to *Working with men and their families*, the series of Hearts of Men training manuals. For professional reasons, these resources are generally only made available to those participating on a Hearts of Men training programme or course.

Apart from the chapters within each section of the book, we also share some stories, personal accounts and reflections from Hearts of Men facilitators, programme participants, partners and teachers, among others. These are spread throughout the book. For reasons of confidentiality, we don't attach specific names of individuals, organisations, schools, government departments or communities, to each of these contributions. All contributors are acknowledged at the back of the book.

The authors

The two authors, Des van Niekerk and Nic Fine, are both founder members of Hearts of Men. Together, they have more than 60 years of experience in working with men and young men in community and institutional settings, as well as in facilitation, training, programme design and in managing interventions. Between them they have authored several training manuals and resources. Nic has served for many years as the Hearts of Men Chairperson, and currently serves on the Hearts of Men Board. Des has worked in a variety of capacities for Hearts of Men, and currently serves as the Hearts of Men Director.

For more information on the authors, please refer to the following section, "Introducing the authors", and also for their abridged CVs in the appendices.

On the usage of 'we' in this book

'We' refers to the authors and their actions, or to what the organisation (Hearts of Men) does.

INTRODUCING THE AUTHORS

This work we do is both professional and personal. Whilst we are aware of keeping clear boundaries, because of the specific content, the people and the situations we are engaging with, it is impossible for the work not to touch us and to inform us as men, as husbands, and as parents. We are aware of how our past has influenced us, and keep asking ourselves the question: “Why do we do what we do?”

Nic Fine

Unplanned journeys

I come from a line of extremely resourceful and hardworking men and women. Their ability to deal with whatever surprising events life presented them with, commitment to family and to making a contribution, has inspired me in my life. What we all have in common are unplanned journeys, brought about by economic depression, political conflict or religious persecution.

My great-grandparents on my mother's side of the family migrated from Russia and Ireland respectively to South Africa. Theirs was an arranged marriage. My great-grandfather was a 'smous', a trader who travelled through the Karoo with his horse and cart selling supplies to farmers.

My grandparents on my father's side of the family migrated from what was then known as the Russian borders— Latvia and Lithuania – to Cape Town. My grandfather was a baker and established his own baking business with another Jewish family.

One of my uncles migrated to South Africa from Holland. He lost all of his extended family in the Holocaust. He was fortunate to flee Amsterdam together with his siblings before the Nazi occupation.

My father volunteered during the Second World War before completing his school education, and ended up in the Royal Navy serving in the

Mediterranean.

On his return from war, he went straight into the world of work with no qualifications whatsoever. My mother was a keen scholar, but missed out on the university education she dreamed of, as my grandfather enlisted her into military service.

My journey

There is an old saying that goes: "If you don't know where you are heading, you will end up somewhere else." This might be a good description of my life story.

I wasn't one of those young men who had clarity in terms of their future profession or work direction. I had several ideas in mind. My philosophy was to explore one of them and to see what happens. I suppose my underlying approach was to go full out, to give everything, and then to evaluate my situation. Apart from my own decision-making, of course, the politics and conflicts of the day had a huge influence on how my life turned out. In many ways my life has turned out to be another unplanned journey.

On completing my school education in Cape Town in the early 1970s, as a young white man I was subjected to compulsory military service. Later whilst studying in Stellenbosch, the political conflict in Southern Africa was intensifying, and within a year of leaving university, I was called up once again, this time for armed combat in Angola.

Leaving Home

In 1980 I decided to leave the land of my birth, not knowing if I would ever return. This sudden move was not part of my life plan. With less than a month of preparation, leaving my home, my family, a girlfriend, and my first job behind, I found myself living in the United Kingdom. And so a new chapter in my life began.

One of my most influential employers during my time in Europe was a Quaker organisation based in London. Through my work with them I was exposed to research, writing and publishing, training in the United States of America

youth and prison services, facilitating programmes in British prisons and working nationally throughout the British youth service. My time spent abroad was both invigorating and challenging.

I had found my path, my passion, working with young people at risk, and doing my best to create a second chance for them. Developing a Leadership Programme for young men in one of the largest Young Offenders Institutions in Europe, focused my mind on working more specifically on the plight of young men and addressing the tough issues they face.

In 1994 I proudly voted in London during the first South African democratic election. My work in British prisons earned an invitation from the Community Law Centre (at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town) for me to spend a year working with them to trial and write up the Leadership Programme in South Africa.

And so in 1995 another unplanned journey began, the beginning of my return home. Of significance here was that my English born wife accompanied me on this her first visit to Africa, and with us was our firstborn child.

On completion of this contract in South Africa, we returned to our home in London where our second son was born. The trip back to Africa had a profound influence on both of us, we saw a role for ourselves in the new democracy and a specific need for the work we were both pursuing.

My return

In late 1997, I made the decision to end my 17-year stay in England and return home. For my wife it meant her leaving close family and friends to begin a new chapter in her life in Cape Town. Accompanying us were our sons, four and one years old respectively.

Back at home I started working with like-minded organisations and individuals. Eventually at the start of the new millennium, the vision for what was to become Hearts of Men was born.

Alongside this particular work path, a personal challenge awaited me, that of sustaining a good marriage, learning how to be a parent, and discovering the wonders of being a father to two beautiful sons.

Fourteen years later I sit here working on telling the story, together with my

colleague Des van Niekerk, of our work in Hearts of Men.

Des van Niekerk

Who am I?

Whenever I am asked to introduce myself I start out by saying "I'm an only child, the youngest of nine."

I come from a blended (reconstituted) family; my father had six children from his first marriage. One day when he returned from work he discovered his wife had left him, leaving behind their three months old baby with her sister, his eldest daughter. My mother had a perfect pair, a boy and a girl, but was unmarried. In the 1960's this meant she became a 'shame' to her family. My father honoured a dying man's request by marrying his daughter, whom he knew but was not romantically involved with. I was born out of this arranged marriage, after a lot of strain was placed on the woman to produce an offspring for her husband.

My father was a great man who taught me the secrets of manhood from an early age. I fondly remember when growing up, that he always told me that I would grow up to be a man of great influence, that I will not work for others but will bring out the best in others and help them to discover their best potential.

My fathering experience

As a vibrant, insightful and energetic teenager, I dated a beautiful, soft-spoken girl who didn't go out much because she was responsible for running her mother's household whilst her mom was working long hours each day.

Our relationship became very serious and as teenagers we had our first child at 18. Because of the lessons I learned from my father, I took responsibility for my actions and a year later we got married.

We immediately saw the need to make a commitment to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and pledged that we will raise this son in the fear of the Lord. We also pledged to each other that we would not have another child until our firstborn is five years of age and we lived in a house we owned. For

the next five years we built our family as backyard dwellers, tenants, moving house at least 10 times.

Four years later, now in our twenties, we became pregnant again, still moving from room to room, sharing living-space with all kinds of people. We were not prepared to share with our parents that we were pregnant as we did not have our own house. In May of 1991 we got our first house through a housing initiative from the council. We gladly shared the news with our parents as well as the news about our newborn on the way. Exactly five years after our firstborn to the day, our second son was born.

We had been blessed with more houses now and cars, so we were settling for two beautiful sons. My wife had a second change of heart, to reunite with her mother because she left home very young. This went on for a better part of two years. Then very suddenly in May 2003, we rushed her mom to hospital and within 24 hours her mom passed away. My wife hit a bad depression, refusing to get out of bed. This went on for months and not knowing what to do we came to a resolution, either we buy a new house or we have a baby.

In 2004, in our thirties, we had what we affectionately call our 'love-child.' Our family was now complete.

How did I get involved in men's work?

I had an awesome father; when he married my mom, he made her children his own. He always blessed us and challenged us by setting the bar very high.

I always wanted to share with other young men the message of being powerful and having the ability to achieve whatever they set their mind to. This opportunity was given to me when I joined the Department of Social Development, then called the Department of Welfare and Poverty Alleviation in the Western Cape, at a place of safety.

Whilst working there I developed a programme for the inmates focusing on skills development through sport. Later, this programme was further developed and became a leadership programme for both the youth in the facility and the caregivers. It was during this programme that the turning point came that shifted my focus from youth empowerment, to specifically father

and son relationships, men and boys through mentoring.

I was facilitating a leadership programme and posed the questions for goal setting: Where do you see yourself in the next five years? What would your first step be? What would be your greatest obstacle to reaching this goal?

One young man responded to the questions in the following way. "I see myself in Pollsmoor (Prison). My first step is to be involved in criminal activity, to commit a bigger crime, but what's preventing me from doing this now is that I am locked up in this place."

After this particular session I called him aside and asked what that was all about and he informed me that I would never understand. This is what he said, "If I go to Pollsmoor, then I will see my father for the first time but more than that, I will be able to see my grandfather for the first time too."

This came as a massive shock, and I suddenly understood the effects of being fatherless. I asked myself the question: "What can I do to address fatherlessness, and to make a difference to this father-hungry generation?"

PART ONE

THE HEART – describing
our
core business

Our focus on men – why we do this
work

Most men don't have a life. Instead, we have just learned to pretend. Much of what men do is an outer show, kept up for protection. By the time he becomes a man, he is like a tiger in a zoo: confused and numb, with huge energies untapped. He feels that there must be more, but does not know what more is. So he spends his life pretending to be happy; to himself, his friends and his family.

Steve Biddulph (Manhood)

A MAN WITH A HEART

Who can call himself a man?

A man who hears - listens to himself and others

A man who expresses - his thoughts, feelings and dreams

A man who acts - and is true to his word

A man who respects – both himself and others

Is a man you can trust – a man you can rely on

Cause he's a man with a heart - a man with a heart

Chapter one

THE HEARTBEAT INTRODUCING OUR WORK

Why the name ‘Hearts of Men’?

We were looking for a name, we brainstormed many ideas, and the minute one of our team called out ‘Hearts of Men’ we all knew we had our name. Why were we so clear, why did this name resonate strongly?

The heart

Many different cultures and writers have focused on the significance of the heart. Plato theorised that reasoning originated in the brain, and that passion originated in the heart. The ancient Greeks believed that the heart was the seat of the spirit. The Chinese believed the human heart was the centre for happiness. The Egyptians said emotions and intellect arose from the heart. It is believed that the ‘love’ association with the heart arose in the ancient Greek city of Cyrene (now in Libya), and refers to the medicinal Silphium plant with its heart-shaped seed pods, that is rumoured to have been used as a contraceptive.

We know the heart as a critical and powerful organ which beats approximately 100 000 times a day pumping about 9 000 litres of blood throughout the body. It has the mighty task of keeping blood flowing through around 96 000 km of blood vessels feeding our organs and tissues. Our arteries transport oxygenated blood away from our heart to our muscle cells, and deoxygenated blood are transported via our veins back to the heart. The heart is an essential component of our physical life force.

The power of four

We see the functioning of the heart as integrated into the core functioning of the entire human body, the heart seen as the core pump, the engine as it were which gives us continued life. We use the structure of the heart with its four chambers as a metaphor in all our work. The structure of four is reflected widely in nature (the four legs of the elephant and the lion, the four seasons, four elements and four directions) and also in human design (the four legs of a table, the four wheels of the motor car). The number four suggests balance.

Getting to the heart of the matter

In our work we use expressions like:

“Get to the heart of the matter” meaning say what you want to say, cut to the core of the matter.

“Speak from your heart” meaning say how you are feeling, how you are experiencing your situation, without censoring what you really want to say, without analysing as you speak.

We use one chant that goes: “I am a man because you are a man, but I can’t trust you, until you show me your heart, but I will love you, until you do.”

We are familiar with descriptions like:

“She is warm-hearted”, “He is cold-hearted”, “She has a heart of stone”, “His apology was heart-felt.”

A healthy heart

Our aim when working with men is to facilitate a healthy heart by reducing stress, by opening up the channels of communication, by forgiving self and others, by expressing anger and moving on, by building self-esteem and appreciating the contribution of others.

Key areas of focus

There are four key areas of focus in our work: development of self, nurturing one’s family, building and contributing to one’s immediate community as well as to one’s wider community. Our work regarding these different focus areas

is described in the following chapters throughout this book.

Four beats to the heart

Our approach in working with men is built on four clear processes: Healing; Serving; Building; and Mentoring. These represent the very heartbeat of Hearts of Men.

In this chapter we give an overview, looking at each one briefly, and more in-depth in the chapters following.

Our First Heartbeat – HEALING

Why healing? Healing from what?

Our experience of working with men in the South African context has revealed to us high levels of trauma. The causes of this include childhood abuse, family breakdown, domestic violence, unemployment and poverty, loss of a parent or parents, and abandonment. If our purpose is to turn men back towards their families, to improve parenting and relationships, and encourage men to play a productive role in their communities, then it is essential that these men are able to come to terms with the past, release anger, and heal from their hurt. It serves no purpose turning an angry, resentful and hurting man towards his family and community.

In our training, we explore four steps in the healing process: **acknowledging, expressing, forgiving, and moving on.**

Acknowledging

We always start with acknowledgement. Acknowledging what has happened is the first step in the healing process. Being able to state what was done to you, or what you have done to others, or what you have experienced, opens the door to the possibility of some form of healing taking place. Without this acknowledgement there can be no movement forward. Sometimes the acknowledgement process takes great courage, as we fear being judged,

being shamed, or not being believed. It needs to take place within a non-judgemental and safe environment.

Expressing

It is often said that men lack an emotional vocabulary, leading to their anger or fear most likely being acted out in aggressive and/or violent behavior. There is a saying that goes: "Violence is resourcelessness." We encourage the expression of the emotions, of anger, of hurt, of fear, and also being able to express one's needs, as part of the second step in our healing process. This requires being facilitated in a safe and controlled environment, in order to prevent harm to either the participant or to others. This step encourages the development of an emotional vocabulary as a non-violent resource when having to communicate and deal with traumatic or highly charged situations.

Forgiving

Working with forgiveness is the third step in our healing process. It involves being able to forgive oneself for what one has done or not done, or the forgiveness of others for what they have done. Forgiving involves compassion, empathy and understanding. It allows the individual to let go and release something that has been unforgiven: been held onto causing resentment, bitterness and pain. Some say forgiving is like turning a key that can bring release from a self-imposed prison. We often ask men: "For whom is the forgiveness?" Our answer is that it is really for ourselves, a letting go of something that serves no positive purpose for us, and does not contribute to our lives. Forgiving is not saying that what has happened is okay or acceptable. It is an acknowledgement of what has happened, and also an expression of how it felt, or what damage has been done, and then a purposeful decision to move on.

We train our participants to understand that forgiveness is a journey and there are no short cuts. However, they must travel this road to unlock themselves from the power that unforgiveness holds over them, and how that paralyses them, leaving them immobile to think or act rationally. The consequences of a lack of forgiveness can help to create dysfunctional families and fragmented communities.

Moving on

We can only talk of moving on once the first three processes are completed. Once we have acknowledged what happened, expressed the effects clearly, forgiven ourselves and others, we are able to move forward. Something else can now be possible, once we have let go of what has held us back. We train our participants to understand that this process of healing is not a quick fix and it takes commitment and guts to follow through.

Moving on involves some planning work. It is always easier to move away from something if you know what you are moving towards. Our moving on process is not a vague notion: “Now you are ready to move on, great”, but rather a specific step that can now be taken, as part of a personal development plan.

For further details on our healing process, go to the chapters on “Working with men” (p35), “Men taking action” (p93), and “Our men’s training” (p83).

Our Second Heartbeat – SERVING

We move from healing to serving. It is often the case that if an individual has made personal strides in the healing process, they feel energised and motivated by a sense of release, like having a weight lifted from their shoulders. This can lead to a desire to serve. Our notion of giving service suggests actions that are positive, supportive, nurturing, contributing to the growth and development of an individual, a group or a community. **Serving focuses on ourselves, on our families, on our communities, and on our wider community.**

Serving yourself

We have a saying that goes: “If you want to serve someone or something, then who is the first person you should serve?” We work from the premise that we are all individually responsible for our personal wellbeing.

We train our participants to understand the importance of looking after themselves, their bodies, what they eat and drink, their exercise, their behaviour, dealing with stress, relaxation, and appreciating life. We work with the notion that if we do not serve ourselves, by taking care of ourselves and

developing our skills, we are not going to have many resources available to be able to serve others productively. We often observe the tendency of serving everyone else's needs and neglecting one's own. Burnout, exhaustion and resentment are often the result of this phenomenon. Giving service doesn't mean continually sacrificing oneself for others. We strive for the balance between participants serving themselves and serving others.

Either way, one practised exclusively to the exclusion of the other is not healthy.

Serving your family

We know that way too many families are living without the presence of a man, or a father. Part of our mission in Hearts of Men is to turn men back towards their families, to become active fathers, to be a positive parenting partner together with the mother of his children, to be a role model to his son/s and daughter/s as to how he conducts himself with women and with men. Being of service to his family is a core and sacred function for any man. In our experience, spending time, listening, playing, watching, enjoying, just being there, cannot be overestimated. A challenge for men is to be able to extend this serving to areas that are often considered the role of the mother; for example, cooking, shopping, repairing clothes, cleaning, or assisting with homework.

Serving your own community

We identify 'own community' as your specific neighbourhood, your children's school, your church or mosque, your sports club, those places that contribute to and have an effect on your family's life. By contributing, for example, to the wellbeing of your children's school, you are serving your own family, and many other families in your community at the same time. We often say "it takes a community to raise a child", and we are all part of that community. The flip side to this saying is that "it can also take a community to destroy a child."

Our family is interacting with our immediate community on a daily basis, so it becomes vital that we make a contribution within our local community and

extended family.

There are many ways in which men can provide that service to their communities, some men choose to provide a voluntary service giving their time and experience, whilst others provide a professional service. We train our participants to provide a voluntary service to their own community by working on specific projects and making themselves available as mentors to young people.

Serving the wider community

In our training we encourage participants to be constantly aware of the plight of other communities around us, in other neighbourhoods, surrounding towns, within our country, or in the world at large. Spreading the good work happening in one community to another community, brings a sense of empowerment, of optimism, confidence and self-esteem to participants. It also serves as a powerful learning tool between different communities.

For further details on serving, refer to chapters on “Working with communities” (p159), “Men taking action”, (p93) and “Working with families” (p147).

Our Third Heartbeat – BUILDING

Our concept of building refers to the creation of structures. This follows directly on from giving service, in that it looks to deepen, sustain and thus render the service provided more effective. When people refer to building a legacy or to leaving a legacy they are suggesting serving in such a way that what you do has a long lasting impact, and that others are able to continue doing what you were doing, long after you have stopped serving.

Here we will focus on the four pillars of building: creating containers, inspiring leadership, developing skills and ensuring sustainability.

Creating containers

When we refer to a container we suggest something that provides a coherent structure in order to hold certain processes, programmes and projects. We

work with the metaphor of the 'potjie', a tough cast-iron pot that can be placed directly on the hot coals in a fire. The potjie comes in different shapes and sizes to suit all one's cooking needs. It is not easily broken and it can take the heat. In our experience we have discovered the critical need to create a strong 'potjie-like' structure within each of our programme communities, to be able to contain the work we are doing. These refer to support structures for mentors, for young men, for staff, for volunteer teams, for managing all operations. A contained team or process is a place where everyone is clear about what they are doing and what their role is. It reduces conflict and provides for a safe and coherent environment within which our work can be successful.

When we work in an uncontained environment or in an uncontained way we see the results of this very quickly; increase in conflict, loss of morale, loss of focus, poor planning, and minimal results.

For more details, refer to the chapter "Circles of men" (p51).

Inspiring leadership

Quality leadership is critical to our whole building process. Leadership as in setting an example, influencing and inspiring others, encouraging innovation, providing creative energy, and supporting all concerned to be the best that they can be. We train our participants to understand that leaders provide a focus for activities and action, and that they need to encourage others to take a stand for what they believe in, and to also take the lead in the process.

For more details, refer to the chapter "Working with leaders" (p197).

Developing skills

Skills development is a critical part of our work. Seeing that staff facilitators, coordinators and managers, all have the capacity to carry out their set objectives, even when under time and resource constraints; seeing that they can maintain their energy levels and motivation to get the job done; seeing that they can think for themselves and make tough decisions when required. These are all vital to the good running of operations and for leadership development. When we designed this programme we made a clear decision to develop the skills of local men by transferring the skills we possessed as facilitators.

We developed a strategy we called “step up and step out” which meant that each year men stepped up to the next level of responsibility, each making way for the other in turn. This allowed local men to become interns on our programme and eventually to designing specific interventions addressing the various needs of their communities.

Our biggest challenge regarding skill development has been on the management level, empowering men to take the step up into governance and for holding responsibility at a much higher level.

For more details, refer to the chapter “Facilitating the work” (183).

Ensuring sustainability

Without sustainability the building process would be futile. The steps we have already mentioned: creating a container, inspiring leadership and developing skills, all contribute towards ensuring sustainability. The sustainability of a community-based programme is determined by a multitude of resources being made available for ongoing support, meaning person power, strategic partnerships and integrated development.

Forging strategic partnerships that will strengthen and enhance the final result, without competing for the glory, is vital. Being inclusive certainly helps. Including parents and children, men and boys, women and girls, youth and elders, educators and learners, local government and community leaders, religious bodies and nonprofit organisations, will create greater buy-in and thus greater endurability.

For further details, refer to the chapters “Working with families” (p147), “Working with communities” (p159), “Working with funders” (p225), “Working with women” (p135), and “Working with strategic partners” (p171).

A MAN WITH A HEART

Who can call himself a man?

A man who hears - listens to himself and others

A man who expresses - his thoughts, feelings and dreams

A man who acts - and is true to his word

A man who respects – both himself and others

Is a man you can trust – a man you can rely on

Cause he's a man with a heart - a man with a heart

Our Fourth Heartbeat – MENTORING

The act of mentoring underpins the whole building process, by supporting leaders, continuing skill development and assisting with issues of sustainability. We have a chapter that is devoted to all aspects of mentoring. Here we focus only on our four basic pillars to mentoring young people, which are:

to admire/to take notice; to praise/to recognise; to challenge; and to guide.

To admire – to take notice

We know that young people are often not admired or taken notice of by adults, and if they are noticed it is when they are in trouble, to shut them up, to discipline them, or to criticise their behaviour. We train our mentors to admire the young man first, to look specifically for the good in what he does. Being admired and taken notice of is what all young people yearn for. It is a basic function of parenting, which many youngsters never experience. To be able to be there, to be a presence, to observe the young man, to admire what he does well, is the first step in the mentoring process.

To praise – to recognise

Praise and recognition follows admiration and noticing. In fact you can't praise and recognise if you haven't first admired and noticed. Young men and women crave the approval and positive statements of adults, especially from their own mothers and fathers. We train our mentors to actively praise the positive things in the youth they are mentoring either publically or privately. We prefer public praise that powerfully affirms the behaviours that help to build solid relationships and a sense of community. Many of our mentors need specific training and support in this area, as they might never have

received open verbal praise and recognition in their own childhoods. It is difficult to give it when you have never received it.

To challenge

The first two pillars help build a positive relationship between mentor and mentee. The next important role of the mentor process is to provide a challenge. Many young people are not challenged to face difficulties in their lives and to make it through their hardships, to never give up. Instead they are bombarded by claims of being “good for nothing” and “you will never amount to anything”, and not being supported to realise their dreams. We train our mentors to engage the youth where they are, telling them how special each one is, and to challenge them to never give up on their hopes and dreams however difficult it may be. We support them in the challenges they face, and we challenge them when their behaviour or actions are undermining them.

To guide

Being able to challenge someone is important in any support process. The challenge must be followed up with guidance and support; exploring possible ways of moving forward, of making a change, of altering the outcome. We train our mentors to guide young people through unknown or uncharted territory, by sharing ideas with them, drawing on their own victories and mistakes from the past. Saying “this is what I did in a similar situation”, and not saying “this is what you must do”.

For further details on mentorship, mentoring styles, mentor roles and managing mentors, refer to the chapter “Mentoring at work” (p103).

HAVING TO EXPLAIN OUR NAME

We were going to a meeting at a child welfare organisation. As we drove up into their parking area, one of their employees saw our logo and name on the side of our vehicle. As we got out the vehicle, she commented, “Hearts of Men - that seems sexist.” One of the guys in our car said something along these lines: “Aren’t men also to be developed? We are an organisation that strengthens the family. We focus on the man in our work, that is all, we do not exclude women.” It seems that names of organisations that contain the word ‘men’ in them, are very noticeable and somehow provocative. We are so very used to the idea of women’s organisations. But maybe it is a good thing that our name provokes a response. That allows us to engage in a conversation, which is good.

Chapter two

WORKING WITH MEN

We are often asked the question:

What do you actually do when you work with men?

In the introduction to this book and in “The heartbeat” chapter, we share the background and overview of our work. In this chapter we give a more specific overview of our approach to working with men.

In a later chapter “Our men’s training” (p83), we go into detail in terms of our programme content.

THE STATE OF MANHOOD IN SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

When designing our approach to working with men, we reflected on the statements and questions that seem to dominate any discussion on the state of manhood and masculinity:

“Something’s been lost. Most people equate being a man with violence. How do we resurrect the lost art of fatherhood? Why are our prisons filled with men? Why have men got such a bad name? How do we recover the notion of family? How long will it take us to heal the ravages from the Apartheid era? How can we expect women to trust men? If a young man has no father figure or good role model available to him, where can he turn? What roles have men to play in the lives of their sons and their daughters?”

As part of our response to the above, we decided that a holistic approach is critical: engaging a man in all aspects of his life.

We identified four key areas around which to focus our work: **reclaiming manhood; exploring masculinity; restoring fatherhood; facing up to key challenges.**

RECLAIMING MANHOOD

We take a look at this through four different dimensions of men's lives. The relationship men have with themselves; with women; with children; with other men.

Key questions we ask in this section of our training are:

What have we as men lost?

Can we reclaim or restore what has been lost?

If so, how are we going to go about doing this?

Taking care of yourself

The relationship a man has with himself, is critical to how he relates to others and to the world. How he sees himself, how he thinks and feels about himself, affects all his interactions and decision-making. In our work with men we have discovered that a poor self-image often feeds aggressive and violent behaviour, as well as putting stress on personal and family relationships.

We also focus on a man's relationship to his own development regarding his health, education, finances, work, marriage, sexuality and spirituality amongst other areas.

Building strong and respectful relationships with women

We explore the different kinds of relationships men can have with women: as friends, as marriage partners, as work colleagues.

We explore the relationships men have with their grandmothers, mothers and their sisters.

We focus on areas of possible conflict between men and women: managing finances, negotiating sex, balancing authority in the home, and joint decision-making.

Developing healthy relationships with our children

We explore our relationships as men with our sons and daughters, our

stepchildren, and other children in the community.

We look at the specific roles men can play in the lives of young men and young women.

We look at the importance of co-parenting and the different roles men and women might play within the family environment.

Valuing our relationships with important men in our lives

We acknowledge the important role played, as well as the influence other men have in our lives.

We focus on the critical relationship we have with our own fathers and grandfathers.

We explore the nature and value of male friendships in terms of support and in the expression of our masculinity.

We focus on our interactions with other men at work and in our community.

EXPLORING MASCULINITY

Masculinity versus masculinities

Masculinity in many cultures is very particularly defined. During our formative years most of us are exposed to a very narrow definition or expectation of what it means to be a man or a woman. In many cases this feels extremely limiting in terms of men and women who need to be able to adapt to continual changing circumstances in the economy, employment, urban living conditions, family life and education.

In our work we aim to give men a wider perception of what is possible in being a man. We work with a concept of there being masculinities, rather than one defined masculinity.

We introduce participants to four archetypes: the King, the Warrior, the Lover, the Creator, which we describe as having four different energies.

Often as men we are orientated to one or two of these energies. In our work we aim to create more of a balance by being able to access all four.

'Archetype' is a term used to describe a common phenomena or prototype. For example, 'the wise old man' or 'the earth mother', and which are assumed to reflect universal human thoughts or concepts found in most cultures.

The common aspect of each of the above-mentioned archetypes is the generation of a positive energy to produce results in order to build strong relationships and effective action.

As with all energies, they can each be used in such a way that they produce destructive or negative results; people often refer to this as the shadow side of the archetype.

Key questions we ask in this section of our training are:

What aspects of your masculinity do you feel have been inherited, passed down from generation to generation?

Do you feel it is possible to create your own idea of masculinity?

What is possible for us as men, if masculinity is more broadly defined?

The King

Our key focus with this archetype is on service, the energy of serving and supporting others: putting the needs of others before one's own self-interest. The King is an elder who shares his wisdom, knowledge and experience in order to mentor and guide others in finding their own gold within, their own self-worth. Our King doesn't hoard riches for himself, but rather shares and contributes in the lives of others within his community.

The shadow side of this energy would be the dictator, the power-hungry ruler and the exploiter.

The Warrior

Our key focus with this archetype is on action, the energy of taking action, of

doing what needs to be done. This means being bold, decisive and clear. The Warrior is a man who takes responsibility. He will not allow himself to be pushed about and ignored. He speaks up, and stands up for what he believes to be right. He has clear values and principles. He doesn't push others around and misuse his power or influence. He shows deep respect for life and for all living things.

The shadow side of this energy would be the tyrant, the playground bully and the gangster.

The Lover

Our key focus with this archetype is on love, the energy of expressing love for others and for life itself, fulfilling a nurturing role within family and community. The Lover is a man who is comfortable in the expression of his emotions, in playing a nurturing role with his children, a man who sees vulnerability as a strength rather than a weakness. He doesn't manipulate, and strives to be authentic in his interactions with others. He honours his commitments; his word counts.

The shadow side of this energy would be the playboy, the cheat and the manipulator.

The Creator

Our key focus with this archetype is on creativity, the energy of contributing one's talents and creating a better world for all. It means believing one has a unique role to play and thus generating hope within oneself and others. The Creator brings forth his special magic into the world through the medium of communication, innovative thinking, powerful speaking and listening.

The shadow side of this energy would be the joker, the dreamer and the wishful thinker.

In our experiential course "Wild at Heart", we introduce participants to these four archetypes.

RESTORING FATHERHOOD

The terms *absent father*, *marriage breakdown*, *divorce*, *domestic violence* and *fatherless generation* form part of nearly every conversation on the state of the family and parenting in South Africa today.

In our work we focus on turning men back towards their families, in order for them to fulfill their sacred duty, as both husbands and fathers. Many men have not been fathered themselves. This either motivates them to do things differently and commit them to their children, or it can cause them to repeat their own painful experience of abandonment and betrayal, by turning away/ running away from their own partners and children.

We explore what we have learned from our own fathers and grandfathers about the role of a father, both positives and negatives. We deepen the understanding of what it means to be a father today.

Key questions often asked are: what is the specific role of the father? Is it different to the role of a mother? How can a man learn about fatherhood/ parenthood if he hasn't experienced being fathered or parented himself?

How does a man break from his immediate experience with his own father being unfaithful and untrustworthy?

We focus on two key aspects of a father's role: **doing and being**. Doing what a father needs to do, and being how a father needs to be, all the time aiming to set an example for his daughter and son.

Doing

Doing concentrates on what we as fathers can actually do:

Creating real time with family: observing, interacting, listening, sharing, and being present for our wives and children.

Giving our full participation in the home: whether it be cleaning, organising, cooking or supervising.

Providing for the needs of our families: physical, financial, spiritual, educational and recreational.

Relating to the family unit as a team: doing all the above-mentioned actions together, and working as a team with our partners/wives and children.

Being

Being concentrates on how we as fathers actually are:

The father's look: the quality of the attention we give to those close to us, being observant.

The father's ears: the quality of the listening we give to those we love, listening with compassion.

The father's touch: the sense of warmth and safety we give to those who depend on us, being both gentle and firm.

The father's voice: the ability to share our experience and to give guidance and support when needed, speaking with compassion.

For more details of this work, refer to the Hearts of Men training manuals.

Feedback from Hearts of Men programme participants

On transformation: *"I went to an information session which was given by Hearts of Men. This information session took the form of a men's circle, and I was very interested in the way the men who were there opened up to each other. I got involved because I wanted to change. I wanted to get rid of my demons."*

"When I joined the programme I had a drinking problem, like many of the men on the farm where I work, and I was also at times verbally abusive to my family."

On development: *"Our manager who introduced the Hearts programme to us said that they focus on bad men and rehabilitating them. But when the Hearts man stood up to speak, he said that they focus on any man who wants to develop himself. Their focus is on all of us as men, and not 'bad' men."*

On parenting: *"I first thought that being a father was just a formality because men at some stage of their lives become fathers. I learnt that I should become an example to my children. I have also started to listen to*

my children. I spend more time with them also."

On marriage: *"I thought that I did all the husband duties right. The programme showed me that I should show my emotional side also. Most men suffer in silence and the Hearts programme gives men a platform to speak. It is important to be able to speak about what you are feeling, otherwise we men can react in destructive ways."*

On family: *"For years, my family lived separate lives, but since I started with the programme, my family is now more united. Decisions are also now done collectively, in the past when I was not really part of the family, they made decisions without me, and I without them."*

On motivation: *"I used to be the silent type, but the programme has given me a boldness to speak. I started to set goals for myself. I started to seek opportunities for myself. I of course got criticised for being forward but that was not the case. I eventually was asked to be the manager of a farm and then in 2011, got to be manager of my own piece of land."*

On communication: *"I listen more to people and do not shout to get my point across. I also employ eye contact when I speak to my staff and have a new body posture now that I understand how a leader should act."*

On relationships: *"I now reach out to people instead of being shy. I am more open with people also. When I get home I now chat with my wife, and we go to bed together. I used to just sit in front of the TV and watch what I want, and go to bed much later."*

On commitment: *"I am a man of principles now. I remember where I came from and do not want to go back there. Yes, the programme has had an impact. I can also see the men now drinking less and smoking less dagga."*

On support: *"I want to get more involved in the programme. I want to be the leader. When I started as a manager, I held a meeting with the staff. I asked them for their support because they knew that I was a new manager. I also have an open door policy with them so I can support them."*

On the role of men: *"I began to challenge the myth that portrays men only as hunter-gatherers, fighters and defenders. This myth kills the notion of men as lovers, friends, fathers, uncles, brothers and good companions. If it is true that a man is the leader of his family, the question begs to be asked, 'How can a man lead without loving his family?' Because then he will lead by fear, by terror, and will not win respect and loyalty, but rejection and disdain."*

Facing up to key challenges

Apart from our focus on reclaiming manhood, exploring masculinity and restoring fatherhood, through our experience, we have identified four key challenges we need to address when working with men: **self-image and identity; power and violence; making relationships work; overcoming addictions.**

Self-image and identity

A healthy self-image and a strong sense of identity are critical to our wellbeing and shaping the way in which we relate to others. When we have a poor sense of self, we can go to great and drastic lengths to gain a sense of worth and acceptance. When our sense of identity is unclear and confused, we often grasp at inclusion and belonging in ways that don't serve us well.

Only through respect for self, can you begin to show respect for others. We have discovered through our work that those men who feel the need to push others around, dominate, abuse, control and hurt, do not have a great regard for themselves.

In our work we address how **we see ourselves**, how **we feel about ourselves**, what **we think about ourselves**, and what **expectations we have of ourselves**. We explore where we come from, our roots and our sense of belonging.

Power and violence

There is a strong point of view that says, sexual violence against women,

assault and rape, are really about male power and dominance, about showing who's the boss, who has the power, about the man demonstrating his dominance.

We look at different kinds of power: political power; economic power; positional power (community, family, workplace, and so on); personal and spiritual power (self-esteem; respect; belief; hope; faith). **We create a distinction between external sources of power, for example, positional power, and internal sources of power, for example spiritual power.**

So often in our country today, the search for power, the maintenance of power, the claiming of power, the expression of power, is accompanied by violence, and very often, extreme violence. We repeat the saying from earlier: "Violence is resourcelessness".

Men resort to violence as the only way. Many men have no other resources available to them. Our work with men, and especially violent men, involves **bringing in a whole new set of resources**, and spending time with them while they integrate and practise using these different ways of behaving and being in the world.

Making relationships work

We work from the basis that everything in life is a relationship: our relationship with ourselves, with others, with money, with work, with religion, amongst other things.

We focus on four cornerstones to building effective and powerful relationships: communication, responsibility, commitment and support.

@ **Practising communication:** speaking from the heart, clear self-expression, effective speaking and listening, exploring the power of language.

@ **Taking responsibility:** being a response to life as opposed to a reaction to life; being accountable and avoiding blaming others, dealing with our mistakes.

@ **Committing yourself:** taking a stand in life for what you believe in, your vision, being your word, giving your word and keeping your word.

@ **Building support:** giving and receiving support; creating support within

family and
community circles.

For more on this, refer to the course “Taking a lead in life” in the Hearts of Men training manual.

Overcoming addictions

What we focus on in this section depends on what arises within a specific participant group. Addictions always surface. They just differ from group to group. We look at any kind of addictive behaviour.

Some obvious examples could be: nicotine, alcohol, hard drugs, food, sex, violence, crime, stealing, or pornography.

Some less obvious examples could be: cheating, affairs, blaming others, short-term relationships (moving from partner to partner), dishonesty or lying.

We explore the **root causes** of the behaviour, the **effects** the addiction has on your life and on those close to you, ways in which you might **alter the behaviour**, ways in which you will **support yourself** in not returning to the addiction.

In some cases a participant might need to be referred for professional treatment and guidance.

Living a life with purpose

In conclusion, we return to our purpose as men. So, what does it mean to be a man? What is my purpose as a man? We are not prescriptive in our approach to describing manhood. We don't provide men with answers. We encourage men through inquiry, questioning, practical exploration and discussion, to find their own answers to the questions “What does it mean to be a man?” and “What is my purpose as a man?” But we certainly do give some guidance on the matter.

We challenge ourselves as men with four key objectives: **to plant a tree; to go on a journey; to build a home; to leave our world a better place.**

To plant a tree

The purpose here is to leave something behind, a legacy that is to be utilised by generations to come. Like planting a tree for others to sit under and enjoy the shade once it is fully grown. This is about making a lasting difference in the lives of others.

To go on a journey

The purpose here is to explore and experience places, cultures and situations other than our own. To move outside of our comfort zone and gain a wider perspective on life. To take up a specific challenge that will stretch and develop our understanding of the world and its people.

To build a home

The purpose here is to encourage us as men to create an environment that is both welcoming and nurturing. A place of belonging, where people feel accepted and secure. A place where there is love and support. This could refer to the family home, to our friendship group, our workplace, our community.

To leave our world a better place

Our slogan is “leave it better than you found it”. The purpose here is to encourage us as men to work towards improving our environment, our living conditions, our institutions and our relationships between people of diverse cultures, classes and religions.

Free dove

I was setting out on a journey that was going to change my life forever. A journey that was going to take me right down into my heart. This is my story – in the heart of a man.

For as long as I can remember, I was walking around with guilt, resentment, lost in my world. I grew up with my grandparents. I was faced with difficulties and hardships, which a child of my age wasn't supposed to deal with. There was no love from my mother (that is what I thought at the time). As I grew

older I realised I was different from my friends, an outcast, for slowly I was drowning in my own world of loneliness. There were things missing in my life. I was longing for a different kind of love, a love only a father could give.

I had the opportunity once of meeting him, but he rejected me. I will never forget that feeling, it was cold, so very cold. I wanted so much to be accepted like a son. But that wasn't going to happen. I grew more and more angry, most of all hating my father, hating myself. I had to buy my way to get friends. I had to be the best in everything I did. I wanted people to recognise me, but that didn't always work.

I grew up, I became a man, but the pain, the hate, the resentment and anger, just wouldn't go away. I started to try different things to alleviate my pain: alcohol, drugs and relationships. I just wanted some peace inside. I wanted the confusion to go away. I grew apart from my family. There was absolutely no communication, except when I was drunk. I just didn't care. I had lost my self-respect.

And then something happened. A friend invited me to go to a programme called Hearts of Men. I thought 'I don't need counselling, I'm not mad.' Week after week he came and invited me, but I just couldn't see any need to go. But on one Tuesday night I decided to go and check it all out. I just wanted to get my friend off my back. That night was the start of something different, a journey in a direction that would change my life.

When I entered the room I found men sitting in a circle. I found it strange. I grabbed a seat. I was welcomed into this circle of men. I was free to talk, but I was told I didn't have to say anything until I was ready. I listened to some of the men, and I immediately knew I wasn't alone. I then started to share my story. In those first few minutes my life didn't feel so strange anymore. Something inside me was being shaken up. The more I spoke, the more free I began to feel.

I continued to attend these weekly sessions. The men began to feel like a family of friends who were willing to listen to me. I began to trust them. They had a code. 'Nothing that is shared in the circle leaves the circle'.

Slowly I started opening up. Sometimes it was painful and sad. Tears rolled. I realised that men hardly ever talk about the things that hurt.

In the circle I found comfort, men guiding men to become men. I was heading in a direction I never imagined. I was being given the opportunity to deal with my anger, pain and resentment.

I was taken for 3 days out into the wilderness, somewhere very cold and uncomfortable, but it was a place where I found myself, a place of happiness, joy, forgiveness, love and acceptance. I gained some skills and strategies that could help me become more effective with my family, my friends, in my workplace, and in my life.

And now I am starting my own circle, a circle in which I am free. It is a circle where I know the man reflected in the mirror who is looking back at me, a man who can talk about his feelings, a man with vision, a man who has so much to give, and a man who is free within his own heart.

Now I know who I am. They named me Free Dove. I am a man, and I am not alone. I do hope that somehow every man can find his heart; in a circle of men. The way I found mine.

(Written by an adult participant in a Hearts of Men community mentorship programme, 2005)

Chapter three

CIRCLES OF MEN

The origins and importance of the circle

For generations and spanning many cultures, men have been coming together, gathering in circles. In a place of worship, under a village tree, in a special meeting room, men have consulted with one another, made important decisions, resolved disputes, prayed and reflected together, reconciled differences, working for the betterment of their families and their community.

These circles and gathering places would be embedded in community and cultural life. A natural succession would be in place, whereby younger men would gain experience, enhancing their negotiating, problem-solving and listening skills, under the guidance of the older men in the circle.

Today men gather in many different kinds of common interest groups, for example: sport, faith, recreational, political, professional, study, support groups and friendship circles. We encourage men to create interest circles within their communities and to include young men in their activities. Many men are active in this, especially within the sports arena.

Too often men's circles are self-serving, meaning not for the benefit of the community, for example a drinking or gambling circle.

In Hearts of Men we aim to create circles of men in community settings, and we also refer to strengthening the family circle.

For reference to the various types of family structures we work with, please see the chapter on "Working with families" (p147).

The mentoring circle

What are the characteristics of a circle? The shape of a circle is round, and it provides a defined space within. It can be open allowing for movement in and out, or it can be closed like a sealed container. Everyone in the circle is facing each other and can be seen. The circle is like a chain with a continuous link between all parts.

In Hearts of Men our circles are both open and closed depending on what phase of the programme we are in.

Phase one

In the recruitment phase, as part of the process of building a circle, we keep it open to allow new men to join as we are introducing the programme.

Phase two

In the training phase the circle is closed to provide for a safe, confidential and focused environment.

Phase three

In the mentoring phase the circle is opened to allow for older men (mentors) and younger men (mentees) to meet. Once this has occurred, this new circle of mentors and mentees is closed.

Phase four

In the project action phase, the circle is once again opened to allow for family and community engagement, and for new membership.

What is the purpose of a circle, what does it provide?

Our key purpose in Hearts of Men is to create powerful circles of men, whereby men transform themselves and other men.

Building a circle provides for a defined structure, where in our case men can gather for a specific purpose, in the same meeting place, at a regular time,

with agreed membership and protocols. It provides for a regular, ongoing, contained, non-judgemental, supportive, facilitated, focused and challenging space.

In Hearts of Men we use predominantly a group-based approach to mentoring, rather than relying purely on the one-to-one model. Young men come to the circle for support and to be held accountable for their actions. Individual mentors are assigned, and the circle provides for a regular evaluative and monitoring space in order to check the success and quality of the mentoring process.

For more detail, please refer to the chapter “Mentoring at work” (p103).

Creating circles

Creating circles that allow groups or individuals who would normally not sit together, to gather and communicate, is a dynamic and exciting exercise.

In the case of Hearts of Men we identified a generational gap between older and younger men. Creating a special circle in which these two groups can interact and in which guidance and support can take place, was seen as a way of closing this gap. This would bring older men into the lives of younger men at community and neighbourhood level in a real and practical way.

Our circle is a place of speaking, a place of listening, a place for feedback, and a place of support.

Creating ongoing structures at community level, which provide for continuity of training and leadership development, is our biggest challenge. Conducting training which lasts a few months, and initiating a mentoring programme which might last for one year is demanding but achievable. Building sustainability with succession planning which lasts for over a decade is what really matters. The ongoing sustained work is what really counts.

In one of our first programmes, which had a three year funding cycle, we were so focused on getting the men's training and mentoring processes right, that we failed to put structures in place to sustain the work after the initial funding phase and the withdrawal of the professional facilitators. Very quickly the initiative fizzled out and eventually collapsed. We experienced short-term success, but longer-term failure.

The strength of a circle, as the holding structure, depends on the ethos and culture that is established and maintained. Identifying and building leadership capacity, as well as ownership within the circle from the start, is critical.

Some examples of the kind of culture we might create are:

Promote revolving leadership, so we take out any contestation of leadership in the group;

Equal distribution of resources, so we remove any conflicts in this regard;

Create a structure that provides clarity of membership, is time and place specific, with a clear purpose, so we can have focus and commitment to the process;

No payments made to group members for their attendance; participation is always voluntary.

(From time to time we might give an honorarium to a participant who is nominated to undertake extra coordinating activities out of the circle time, on behalf of the group.)

The purpose of our circles is to:

promote dialogue;

resolve disputes;

increase understanding;

close the gap between individuals and groups;

produce action and motivation.

Coordinating a circle

Here we give an example of the kind of **coordination structure** we have used, within one of our programme circles:

For this example, let us say there is a group of 20 men who have joined a men's training programme within a specific community.

They could be divided into four support groups each of five men.

Each group would have a nominated leader.

Each member of his team would check in with him every week to confirm they

are attending the weekly session.

If the leader does not hear from team members at the appointed time, he follows them up.

If a man doesn't attend a session, the team leader selects a man to follow up on the missing man.

In this way the circle is kept tight with very specific communication and accountability protocols in place.

The quality of this work and the success of the circle depend upon attention to detail, and to not letting things slip by unnoticed.

When, let's say, 20 mentees join the circle, this system will just be repeated.

In every team of ten (five mentors + five mentees) there will now be two leaders (one older man + one younger man).

It is also a good idea to appoint two deputies in each team so you would have four members of the leadership coordination group within every group of ten.

If one studies the protocols of all successful groups and circles, you will find dedicated leadership, clear communication, and accountability and decision-making structures in place. These all give the initiative clarity and direction.

For more detail, please refer to the chapter "Working with Communities"(p159).

Further use of the circle metaphor

In Hearts of Men we also use the circle metaphor within the actual work content.

Some examples would be:

Circle of Commitment Listening Circle

Circle of Courage Circle of Support

Healing Circle Conflict Circle

Circle of Forgiveness Acknowledgement Circle

Leadership Circle Remembrance Circle

Visioning Circle Mirroring Circle

Family Circle Integration Circle

Each of these circles provides a clear and safe space for something specific to occur; for example:

A group member is facing a family crisis that needs immediate attention.

He might request or be offered a “Circle of Support”, during which he will communicate the situation, explore options and possible solutions with the group, develop a plan of action and ways in which he will receive ongoing support.

A report-back time and date will be set so the situation can be monitored.

Details of these processes can be found in the Hearts of Men training manuals available to course/programme participants. Hearts of Men provides experiential training in the facilitation of these Circle exercises and techniques.

Creating circles

*A great question that is often asked of us: “You guys promote this work, you encourage, you support and train others, but do **you** practise it in your own life? And if so, how?”*

I would like to respond to that question here. At the turn of the century, the year 2000, I made a personal pledge: to involve myself in longer-term projects, in which I could experience relationships growing over time, track results, and also to benefit personally from closer bonds with others and better support for myself. No more hopping from one project to the next. No more short-term pieces of work, which I was finding unsatisfactory. I wanted to create a shift in how I worked and in my life. I wanted to focus on creating and participating in circles that are sustainable, long lasting and above all, rewarding.

My wider community – and the creation of Hearts of Men

In 2001 together with two colleagues, I was part of the establishment of Hearts of Men. I am proud of the fact that the organisation is still in existence

13 years later. We have certainly had our ups and downs, and it has not been easy, but it is very satisfying seeing something through from inception, and witnessing the impact the work has had on so many individuals, families and communities. I started to encourage other staff members to create mentorship programmes within their own communities, but in the process forgetting my own.

My immediate community – creating Coming of Age

Observing this I asked myself the question: “What about me? Where is my community? Why am I not establishing a programme that contributes more directly to my own community, rather than always focusing my attention elsewhere?” I identified the local school my two young sons attended, and all the families I interacted with, as my immediate community. In 2003 a few of us parents in partnership with the teaching staff, started a “Coming of Age” programme for the Grade 10 students. We separated the grade; young men participate in “Moving into Manhood” and young women in “Roots and Wings”. This voluntary programme actively involves both mothers and fathers, and is facilitated by parents. It has now been running for a decade, is well integrated into the school curriculum, and is a wonderful example of how a community can pull together and sustain such a commitment.

My close community – a Book Club for Men

An old university friend approached me with an idea he had, to start a book club for men. “Women all over Cape Town are gathering to discuss and share books of interest, so why don’t men do the same?” We have now been meeting for over ten years. The initial idea was to meet once a month at a different man’s house to discuss books you were reading and wanting to share with others. The concept has slowly developed over time. Each month we gather at a different man’s house and he cooks a meal for all of us; we have time for general conversation, we share writers, films and music that we enjoy. Every year we go on two retreats together. One an inland journey into the Karoo, and the other to a coastal farm in the Cape, where we are isolated and spend time walking, cooking, playing chess, sharing stories, fishing and whatever. And once a year we have a family day including our wives, partners and children. As a group we have experienced many ups and downs: our children growing up and leaving home, the loss of family

members and friends, divorce, as well as personal successes and celebrations.

My core community – my own family

And last and certainly not least, I come to my most important circle. I treasure my wife, our marriage and my two sons, together with my extended family. Being a father, being able to share parenting with my wife and spending time together with my sons, brings me much joy. My family circle is my foundation; they sustain me with love, support and they certainly do challenge me!

Chapter four

WORKING WITH YOUNG MEN

In this chapter we will focus on the way we work with young men, and their transition from boyhood to manhood.

Our motivation

When working with older men we have often heard the remark, “I wish I’d had this opportunity when I was a young man. My life and my marriage might have turned out differently if I’d had a chance to let go of my anger, understand myself a bit better, if I’d had someone who was there for me and to listen to me, when I was younger.” We have found that it is far easier to make an intervention in a younger man’s life, than it is for an older man to make changes after years of conditioning. Working with younger men can extend the benefits and limit the damage caused.

Our focus

We work on examining many popular beliefs. For example:

Real men don’t cry;

Men don’t talk much;

Men keep their feelings to themselves;

Men can’t be trusted;

Men don’t stick around;

Men are violent by nature;

Men don’t take responsibility for their actions;

The man is the head of the household;

The man is the sole provider;

It is natural for a man to have children with many partners.

We wrestle with definitions of manhood handed down to us through our family experience, our education, our culture and our religion. We confront the many contradictions. For example:

Man as provider versus unemployed man;

Man as head of the family versus absent father;

Man as role model versus addicted and/or violent father;

Man worthy of respect versus man disrespectful to women and children.

The actual content of our programme for young men is more or less the same as the work we do with older men. We might just adapt the facilitation and language style, the management of the particular programme, as well as the support systems we offer.

A West African story

The story is told of a young boy who grew up in an old West African village. It is said that in this village the women live in huts at the centre of the village with their children, and the men live in an outer circle surrounding the women.

It just turned midnight and it was the twelfth birthday of Simeon, he lived with his mother in the centre of the village. Suddenly he heard a noise outside. His mother jumped out of bed and ran to the window next to the front door. She shouted out the window, "You can't have him, you can't have my son!"

Outside the men of the village together with Simeon's father, gathered with sticks and torches calling out loudly, "We have come to fetch the boy. Give him to us!" Leading the men was a ghost who ran from the gate to the front door dressed in all-white, his face painted white and the outside of his eyes painted red. It appeared as though the ghost was clearing and opening the way between the men and the front door.

Gripped with fear Simeon hid himself under the bed. He could hear the chants from outside and his mother pacing the floor inside. This went on for

what seemed like hours, and he thought, "When will this all stop? When will this end!"

Suddenly a knock on the door interrupted his thoughts. He could hear his mother going to the door and shouting, "What do you want?"

Then he heard his father's voice from other side saying, "I've come to fetch my son." Then he heard the door opening and his mother called out to him, "Your father has come to fetch you. From now on you will live with your father."

So Simeon now makes the transition from his mother's house to his father's house, where he will be welcomed into the circle of men. Here he will be trained to become a man.

The journey from boyhood into manhood

We approach the notion of becoming a man, as a process. No boy/young man becomes a man overnight. What we do, which is similar to many cultures and traditions around the world, is to lay down a symbolic marker just after puberty, at a time when the boy is physically transforming into being a young man. We welcome him as a young man, into the circle of men. He is thus made conscious of the direction in which he is heading, that is, into manhood. He will need to be guided by older men on this journey.

The lifelong transitions we as men make

We put this boyhood to manhood journey into a wider context. Being a man represents an ongoing process of constant change. Our notion of manhood is challenged and extended, as we pass through and engage each life stage. From this perspective, manhood is redefined and reshaped at each stage:

From birth and babyhood, to boyhood and teenagehood;

From young adulthood to adulthood;

From adulthood to elderhood;

From elderhood to death;

From home to creche to school;

From starting work to retirement;

From leaving home and marriage, to fatherhood and parenthood;

From creating a family, to children leaving home, and grand-parenthood.

The journey as it is supposed to be

There are four symbolic houses through which a boy should pass on his journey into manhood. Each house referred to here, signifies an important and necessary stage in the development of the infant, the boy and the young man.

First house

From birth to seven years – he resides in the ‘house’ of the mother.

Second house

From seven to fourteen years – he resides in the ‘house’ of the father.

Third house

From 14 to 21 years – he visits the ‘house’ of the mentor.

Fourth house

21 years onward – he moves into his own ‘house’.

Of course this timeline is not strictly applied in the real world, it is merely a suggestion, a guideline as to what is desired. The symbolic ‘houses’ refer to being under the main influence of the mother, the father or a mentor, as is appropriate to the specific developmental stage. It is natural for a baby boy to be under the main influence of his mother. It is natural for the boy to start migrating to his father in the years around seven to fourteen. After that it is natural for teenagers to seek a separation from both parent figures. This is the time when a mentor/s can play a vital role.

More often than not we work with young men who haven't had these influences in their lives. Of course we have to deal with the effects this has on their relationships with men and women, and how they view the world. There are many young men who have never had the opportunity to bond with a mother and/or a father figure in their early years, and this comes at a cost.

Understanding and acknowledging these important transitions

The marking of the progression of the life cycles is an important process that has been lost in present times. Past generations marked the moment when young men reached a certain stage in their lives, moving from boyhood to manhood. Carefully designed rituals were used to celebrate the crossing-over often celebrated by the whole community as they witnessed the young man leaving his mother's house to live in his father's house.

In his pursuit of understanding himself as a boy becoming a man, the young man needs to understand his journey with its many different stations. From the apron of his mother's generosity, to the side of his father's mastery in the field; to the independence of young adulthood and fending for himself, to having understanding of who he is and where he belongs.

This takes him on a road that leads to separation from what is familiar, his home and environment, his family and his friends, his past and what he came to believe to be his identity. This journey of self-discovery is where the young man will face many strangers: good men, elders, mentor figures who will guide him on his way to ultimately let go of the painful past; open the gates of unforgiveness, and be released on the pathway of finding his true identity, his purpose for being here, and the direction he is to follow.

Feedback from a school staff team

We want to thank you for leading our adolescents through a very important transitional phase. They have deeply benefitted from the whole process. It is like a pebble being dropped into a pool, where the ripple effect touches the young man and woman, their family, their class, the school, and eventually also the wider community.

It is of great help for us as teachers to be able to entrust the youngsters into your capable hands, your experience and groundedness for the coming-of-age programme. It brings about an objectivity, and a different level of trust that wouldn't easily be possible, if we as teachers were involved in the facilitation.

Masculinity versus masculinities

Many young men grow up with a very limiting and tightly prescribed definition of what it means to be a man. Just as we do when working with older men, we encourage young men to have a wider view of what is possible in being a man.

As a training tool we use our symbolic 'Cycle of Life' map to illustrate this and to guide us. We work with the four core directions – east, north, west and south. These directions charter our journey through life, with the baby born in the east, where the sun rises, signifying a new dawn. Adolescence sits in the north, adulthood in the west and elderhood in the south.

Each of the **four directions** also has:

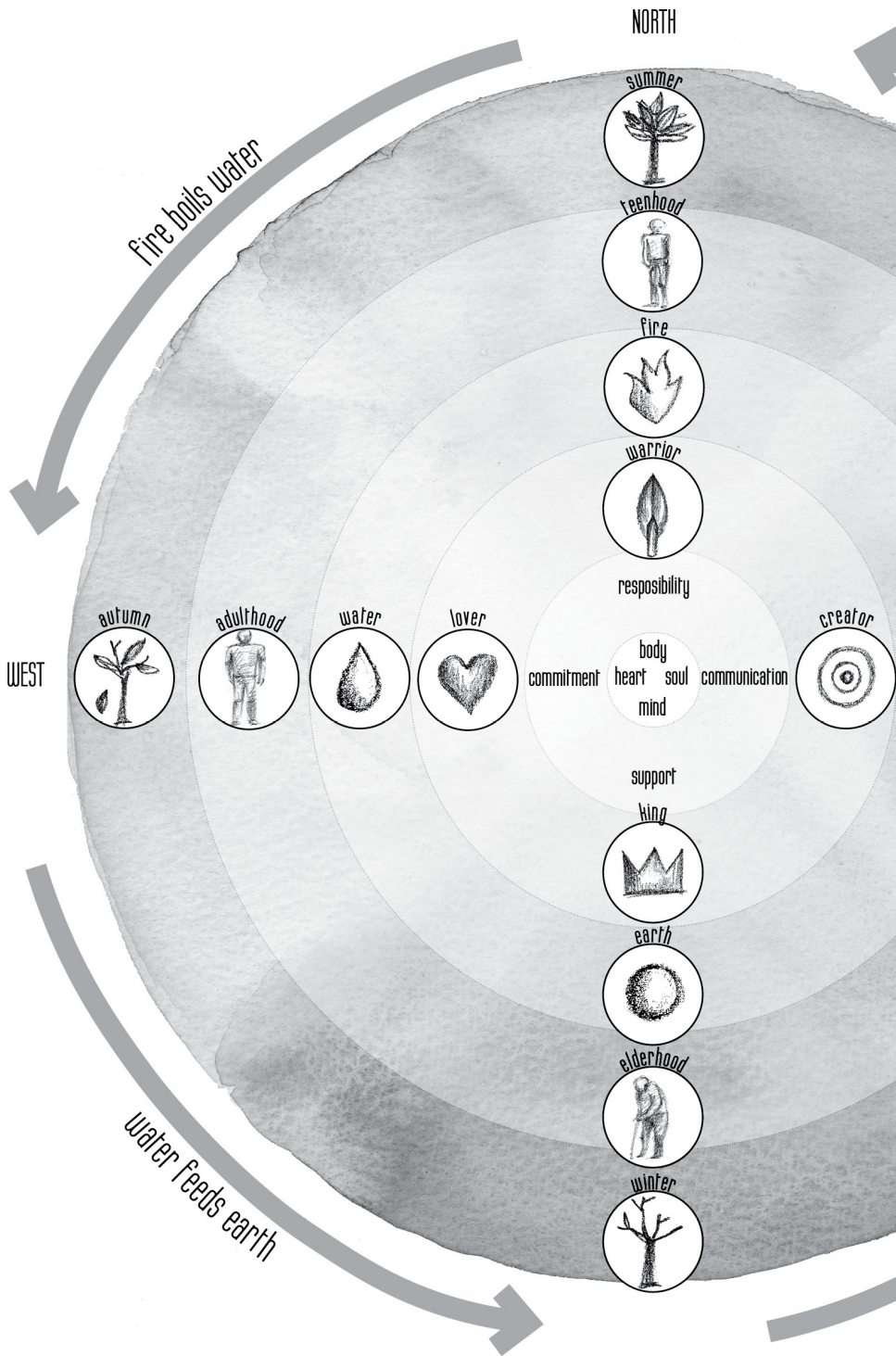
A **season** ascribed to it – spring, summer, autumn and winter;

And also an **element** – air, fire, water and earth;

An **archetypal energy** – Creator (creativity), Warrior (action), Lover (nurturing) and King (service);

And a **cornerstone** – communication, responsibility, commitment and support.

The cycle of life



1. NORTH - heat of the sun
2. Summer - warmth, energy, being outside
3. Teenagehood - developing, exploring, challenging, identity
4. Fire - warming, protecting, reshaping, destroying
5. Warrior - action, power, direction, decision
6. Responsibility - responding, taking a stand
7. Body - outer physical world
8. Red - bold, passionate

1. WEST - the sun sets
2. Autumn - releasing, shedding, changing
3. Adulthood - reflecting, renewing, maturing
4. Water - washing, cleansing, healing, flexible
5. Lover - nurturing, giving, forgiving, compassion
6. Commitment - powerful, keeping your word
7. Heart - feelings, emotions, generosity
8. Blue - depth, beauty

1. EAST - the sun rises
2. Spring - new life, beginnings, joy
3. Babyhood - birthing, first steps, discovery
4. Air - breathing, imagining, thinking, expanding
5. Creator - generating ideas, connecting, cultivating
6. Communication - magic of speaking, listening
7. Soul - inner spiritual world
8. Green - growth, celebration

1. SOUTH - darkness of the night
2. Winter - being inside, hibernating, preparation
3. Elderhood - guiding the next generation
4. Earth - grounded, strong roots, planting
5. King - observing, serving, developing others
6. Support - asking, giving, offering, receiving
7. Mind - wisdom, thoughtful, insightful
8. Gold - resourceful, strength

We find that having this structure has proved to be a very accessible tool in exploring the diversity within manhood. Men from a wide variety of ages and backgrounds have found it easy to relate to the seasons and to the natural world around us. As with all things we seek a healthy balance; a man must experience all the seasons, must incorporate all the elements, and explore the different energies within his life.

For a further description of the archetypes, refer to the chapter “Working with men”(p35).

Further details on the use of the ‘Cycle of Life’ map refer to the course ‘Wild at Heart’ in the Hearts of Men training manual available to Hearts of Men participants.

Core attitudes we face when we work with young men

In our programme design we have to take cognisance of the attitude many young men display when we first engage with them. These attitudes have of course been shaped by their life experience, and tend to feed into and reinforce one another. This pattern of events then leads to what we would call a vicious cycle.

When these young men come to the programme they exhibit a hard, “don’t mess with me” exterior, which they built up as a defence mechanism, an exterior wall of coldness, to protect themselves against the outside world. They are not the easiest people to work with or even share the same space with. They are also very painfully aware of how most people would rather avoid them, turn a blind eye, or a cold shoulder. We hear descriptions such as ‘frozen heart’, ‘heart of stone’ and ‘broken-hearted’.

The core attitudes we identify are:

Distrustful and defensive attitudes

Many young men have experience of being abandoned, disappointed, let down, attacked or abused. This naturally develops into an attitude of not trusting or being able to rely on adults, and wanting to defend and protect themselves. This sometimes can manifest itself as aggressive and impulsive

behaviour.

Uncontained and anti-social/destructive attitudes

If there is a breakdown in trust and understanding between the generations, it causes young men to be uncontained, unrestrained as it were, by parental/ adult figures within the family and community. This can lead to anti-social and destructive behaviour. We refer to this as the running-wild syndrome.

Labelled, blamed and shamed

Once young people start causing damage, hurt and disruption, they get labelled as such. The labels they get just seem to reinforce the negative behaviour, which is sometimes just a way to gain some recognition, to be noticed. They enter into a destructive cycle of being blamed for what they do, often punished and publicly shamed.

Hopelessness and cynicism

With being labelled 'no good', 'good for nothing', 'bad child', 'evil', 'criminal', 'stupid' and 'useless', they often defiantly set out to prove us adults right, by trying to be even worse. Underneath all of this bravado there often lies a feeling of hopelessness and cynicism. That possibly "nothing is worth it", "things will never get better" and "that life sucks."

Four key phases we follow in our work with young men

We navigate the participants through the following phases:

Engaging with the young men; crossing the threshold; undertaking the journey of discovery;

entering the circle of men.

First phase – Engaging with the young men

It is a great challenge to engage young men to participate in this work and to

facilitate their movement and progression from:

Distrust to trust; defendedness to openness; low self-esteem to self-belief;
feeling hurt and broken, to healing and feeling whole; being destructive, to
being creative;
living with no hope, to gaining hope.

This engagement phase includes

Exploring and implementing recruitment strategies;
Presenting the programme to potential participants;
Drawing up and signing participation contracts and agreements;
Building trust between the young men themselves, and between them and
the facilitators.

When we recruit the young men, we look for boys who are experiencing difficulties at school or at home, in trouble with the law or at the brink of joining the gangs. This last category is a very tough group to recruit as the gangs has already earmarked them for membership. Many of these young men possess remarkable leadership potential that is being used in a negative way, and our role is to get them into our programme to cultivate that talent in order for their families and community to have the best results possible.

In this phase it is important that the young men start to see a possibility for themselves and their future in their participation in the programme. They have to feel in some way inspired to step in, to make the initial commitment. Our notion of engagement thus includes inspiring, contracting and building trust.

For more information on recruitment and presentations, please refer to the chapter on “Working with communities” (p159). For information on participant contracts and agreements, refer to the Hearts of Men training manual available to course participants.

Good role models

We were asked by a government department to do a mentorship programme for young men. In the chosen community, it was at the height

of gang violence and many people were losing their lives. Whilst facilitating a mentoring session one afternoon, gangsters started shooting right outside the community centre where we were running the programme with 20 young men and 10 mentors.

The young men ran to the window to watch the spectacle which was taking place right in front of their eyes, while the mentors dived for cover under the chairs in the room. Disregarding their safety the young men wanted to witness all the action that was taking place outside. They idolised the gangsters outside, mimicking their gun-shooting action for many weeks, revelling in the possibility that they would do it one day.

Second phase – Crossing the threshold

The threshold suggests a place, a specific marker between two points, a crossing-over, for example entering nursery school for the first time, or leaving primary school and entering high school. In our programme the threshold indicates a marker we lay down that indicates the young man moving away from his boyhood and moving towards manhood.

This phase includes all the build-up to the actual crossing-over:

Taking stock: a process in which participants review where they are in their lives and where they are heading, checking on what is at stake for them.

Preparation process: gathering together all equipment, provisions, making all personal and group arrangements, taking care of any medical/individual needs.

Departure process: this begins with a special ceremony to mark the young men's departure - in the case of young men it is his mother/grandmother/or nominated woman that sends him off with a blessing, and the process continues with a journey away from the home/community to an unknown destination.

Entering the transition: the young men's arrival at their secret location is carefully planned with a series of unexpected events, which mark his actual crossing-over into the transitional space.

Third phase – Undertaking the journey of discovery

During this three- to five-day wilderness experience, the young men meet older men unknown to them who represent the four archetypes – the Magician, the Warrior, the Lover, and the King. The participants go through various challenges and processes; they spend time on their own in reflection, they spend time in the group sharing their life-stories, they take part in various ceremonies/rituals which focus on letting-go, healing, inspiring and visioning. They also get to sing, dance and celebrate. And they get to spend reflection time on their own, which we call the solo experience.

The crossing the threshold rituals and ceremonies we refer to, are the ones that are used by families, tribes and communities to demonstrate the growth and development of a particular young man as he is welcomed into manhood. However, many of these traditions and rituals practised by past generations have died, and are no longer celebrated. These ceremonies and rituals give young men a sense of pride and identity, and also a sense of belonging. They are positive and uplifting. They are not to be confused with many modern-day initiations that welcome young men into school and university hostels, or into gang structures.

These processes are fully recorded in the 'Wild at Heart' course section of the Hearts of Men training manual.

Ten cents

Upon returning from his 'solo' spot a young man brought a ten cent coin along that he had picked up at the spot. During the story-telling session he told of how the shopkeeper would never give him a loaf of bread at the cost of R1 if he only had 90 cents, or alternatively 10 cents. He went on to talk about how the ten cents barely has any value on its own. But if the two are put together to make R1, it will be enough to buy the bread without any hassle from the shopkeeper.

His story then turned to himself when he started talking about how he left home at a young age, and had not seen his mother and sisters in a very long time. He told us that they are not complete without him, even though they are 90 cents and he the 10 cents. He continued by saying that only

when they are rejoined, will all of them be the R1 (one rand) and be totally complete.

Fourth phase – Entering the circle of men

This final phase of entering the circle of men focuses on:

Recognition, Celebration, Blessing and Mentoring.

Recognition

This final phase signifies the young man entering the symbolic circle of men. It is now formally being recognised that he is entering a phase of his life in which he is learning and preparing himself for the responsibilities that come with being a man. Our ideal is that he has a real circle of men that will be there to guide and teach him as he grows into manhood. The older men in the circle prepare a ceremony to welcome the young men into the circle of men once they have completed their journey. This stage of public recognition is important and provides positive reinforcement. We face the question: If we as older men don't provide recognition to young men, then who will? We know that young men crave to be seen, acknowledged and recognised.

Celebration

The young men are welcomed back home with a special ceremony during which they are blessed by their father/grandfather/or chosen elder. We find that celebration has been very much overlooked in modern society. We see when working with men that they don't see the need or reason to celebrate small things. This comes from years of oppression, hardship and unemployment. The young men we work with come from homes where their achievements are overlooked, and if acknowledged, it will still not be celebrated often due to the lack of time and resources. To encourage the young men we deliberately set out to design moments and create opportunities to celebrate.

We build in rituals and ceremonies to celebrate the completion of one stage and the beginning of a new one. We also create ceremonies to celebrate the achievements of the young men witnessed by their families and invited community members, where the young man will be given the opportunity to publicly share his experiences, his joys and challenges with his family and

friends.

Blessing

A blessing can contain:

An acknowledgment of a talent;

The identification of a unique quality;

A special wish for the future;

An encouragement to achieve something special.

There is a process we call the '*blessing of the elders*' that becomes pivotal in the development of the young man within our programme. Because most of the positive things these young men do go unnoticed, we have zoned in on this as an area where we can catch them doing something good. The older men in the circle have a responsibility to carefully observe the young man, not with the intention to judge him, but just to notice him, with the intention to publicly acknowledge and bless him.

This blessing will take place whenever the elder feels the need to acknowledge the young man for something he has done out of the ordinary, for example the young man might be someone who never does anything for anyone without payment, and reports are received from the parents that the young man has cleaned his room, washed his clothes and prepared supper for the family, or alternatively the young man went to clean an elderly neighbour's yard and cut the grass for them.

We have had boys who were not allowed in the classroom due to their disruptive nature, become the learner who has progressed the most in one term, since joining the programme. We have also had young men in our programme who dropped out of school, who we have managed to get back into school, two of them going on to be amongst the top matriculants in their region, head boy and chairperson of the student body and business forum, both progressing to university.

Giving the young men a new name

As part of the process of blessing the young men, we give them a new name. We call it their animal name. After closely observing and listening to them, we select an African animal and an appropriate quality for each young man. An

example could be “Compassionate Lion”, “Insightful Giraffe” or “Determined Wildebeest”.

In some cases the quality and the animal selected for a particular young man represents what we as elders see in him as we witness his participation.

The new name given could also represent a specific challenge we set for the young man. In other words it is an animal and quality that he can grow into, over time.

This process of giving new names is part of welcoming the young men into the wider circle of men. The names are given at a special naming ceremony. The elders also share the names of their ancestors and their own animal names with the young men.

As part of our programme, and to introduce the concept of receiving a new name, we relate the allegorical story of a young man who undertakes a journey of discovery, during which he receives his new name, “Rising Eagle.” Recipients are encouraged to do some research into the behaviour and qualities of the animal specially selected for them.

Mentoring

Supporting the young man through this transition and giving him guidance while he makes changes in his life, are critical. We stress the importance that each young man in our programme will receive mentoring for an agreed period of time, ideally for a minimum of six months, hopefully for up to a year.

Our mentoring processes and procedures are covered in detail in our chapter “Mentoring at work”(p103).

Each young man that volunteers to become part of the programme, will either be part of group mentoring and/or individual mentoring. He will be asked to work on three goals he wants to achieve during the course of the programme: **a personal goal, a goal with their family, and a community goal.**

The mentors appointed are usually local men from the same community and will be tasked with supporting the young man in achieving his goals through well-defined projects. The young man is expected to attend two weekly support sessions, one with the facilitator, and the other with the mentor paired with him or the group he is assigned to.

In conclusion, we have discovered in giving the right kind of support, that

notices young men, challenges and acknowledges them when they do good or bad, and provides guidance when needed: that these young men can go on to become very powerful contributors within their families, communities and in the world.

More details on working with projects are given in the chapter “Men taking action” (p93).

The fatherless epidemic

We were running a leadership programme in a secure institution for young men and Mother’s Day was fast approaching. One of the participants asked us if we could get him a card he would like to send to his mother on that special day. We checked with the other participants and all wanted the opportunity to send cards to their mothers and grandmothers. When the rest of the block heard about our idea they also requested cards.

We organised the cards for the young men and by the time Mother’s Day came around all the cards were used. A month later it was time for Father’s Day. We thought that we will not be caught off guard again and organised cards we hoped would be enough for the guys. Father’s Day came and passed. Not one inmate asked us for a card and none of the cards were used.

This was a real eye-opener to us, the fact that one of the biggest epidemics our nation is facing is fatherlessness, the emotionally distant or absent father.

PART TWO

THE CONTENT – examining
what
passes through the heart

Our approach – what we do

MEN IN THE CIRCLE

In an empty school room
Men gather
The community is poor
But something is different
In this circle of men

They are here to learn
About themselves so that
They may help guide the
Young men in their journey
From boyhood to manhood
A tradition that was lost for
A very long time

A friendship grows
Between the men
Allowing the pain
Which each man carries
To be spoken, perhaps
For the first time

As the men speak their pain
Others are touched deeply
And all take a step
To heal the pain
Of many hard years
Of living

A deepening care for each other
A willingness to share
Allows the gold that hides
In each man
To shine

A group of men who
Are willing to care for their community
Instead of
Tearing it apart
These men have a heart
That has not
Been seen for generations

In this group if you are awake
You may catch sight
Of this gold that is
In every man
Is in every boy

I thank those
Who created this circle
So men may heal
So men may be
Who they really are
Thank you for holding us
Men in the circle

(This poem was written by a Hearts of Men mentor)

Chapter five

OUR MEN'S TRAINING

Delivering our training syllabus

Our training syllabus for men comprises six courses equalling a minimum of 28 sessions (up to three hours each) plus a three to five day residential camp. If held at one session per week, it will take up to seven months to complete. If held at two sessions per week it can be completed in three and a half months.

Part-time delivery of training:

6 courses: minimum of 28 three-hour sessions

Plus a 3- to 5-day residential camp

At one session a week duration: 7 months

Or at 2 sessions a week duration: 3 to 5 months

It can also be delivered in a shorter time frame if done more intensively. As a full-time intensive course, it can be completed in 14 days/two weeks without any breaks, or over three weeks, including weekend breaks.

The course is more effective delivered over time, less intensively, as this gives time in between sessions for practical application of learning and for reflection. This is more desirable within a community programme setting.

Delivering the programme over a longer timeframe also gives the facilitators an idea as to the level of commitment and reliability of the participants, with regards to the regularity of their attendance and levels of engagement.

Intensive delivery of training:

In the heart of a man: one day

Reclaiming manhood: three days

Wild at Heart: five days

Taking a lead in life: two days

Leadership in action: 1-5 days

Mentoring in action: 1-5 days

Duration: 14 days, i.e. two weeks without a break

Or over 15 days, that is, three weeks with 2 weekend breaks

The intensive delivery style might be more appropriate for professional staff-training.

The training syllabus described below is exactly the same for older men as for younger men. With younger men some of the conversations might be adapted. You can refer to the Hearts of Men Training Manual for further details.

The syllabus is designed for a typical Hearts of Men Manhood Mentoring programme. If the focus shifts, we merely shift the focus of each section. The basic structure of the course stays the same.

An example of adapting the course focus for a Fatherhood Mentoring programme (here meaning older fathers mentoring young fathers), the section titles would read: In the hearts of fathers, Reclaiming fatherhood, Fathers taking a lead in life, Fatherhood in action, Mentoring fathers.

The contents of our training syllabus reflects the following key programme phases

The setting-up phase;

The course delivery phase;

The practical application phase (projects);

The follow-through phase.

These phases include the following processes

Presenting: speaking with individuals and with groups; presenting the programme as a possibility for men and their communities;

Recruiting: getting specific men to enroll in the programme for at least one year, and committing to dates/times and so forth;

Engaging: forming the group (In the hearts of men);

Connecting: deepening the conversations. Who am I as a man? (Reclaiming manhood);

Healing: deepening participation. Where do I come from? (Wild at Heart);

Visioning: exploring what is possible. Where am I heading? (Wild at Heart);

Leading: taking control of my life. (Taking a lead in life);

Committing: taking a stand for my family and my community (Leadership in Action);

Mentoring: training in supporting and coaching others (Mentoring in Action).

The cycle then returns to the Presenting and Recruiting phases, as we repeat the whole process by including new older men as mentors, as well as new younger men, that is, a second group. This time the intention is for some of the older and younger men from the first group to now take on more of a leadership and support role with the second group.

OUR TRAINING SYLLABUS

It comprises six courses facilitated in the following specific order:

Course one: In the heart of a man

(up to four sessions)

An introductory course during the recruitment and engagement phases, which aims to establish the group, build participants' trust and confidence in communicating with each other in a group setting.

General themes covered are: How we see and relate to the world around us, to relationships, family life, to parenting, and so forth. Reflecting on the image, expectations, behaviour, reputation, pressures and responsibilities of men in the world.

Course two: Reclaiming manhood

(a minimum of 10 sessions)

Exploring what it is to be a man, and rebuilding a positive image of manhood.

We cover most of the following focus areas, depending how many sessions are allocated to this course:

Examples of session focus:

- @Making peace with your father; identifying the role your father played;
- @Establishing good male friends; identifying the importance of male friends;
- @Treating women as equal partners; examining your relationship with women;
- @Keeping fit and healthy; taking care of yourself, how you feel about your body;
- @Exploring sex and sexuality; discovering the sacredness of sex and intimacy;
- @Facing up to addiction; acknowledging the damage done;
- @Becoming a parent; identifying the critical role you play as a parent;
- @Earning a living; exploring the world of work: finding a job that you love;
- @Managing your finances; examining your relationship to money;
- @Developing your talents; discovering what you are really good at;
- @Developing your spiritual life; sharing your spiritual beliefs and practices;
- @Finding your place as a man; tapping into your potential, releasing your male energy, having a passion for life and contributing to a better world.

Course three: Wild at Heart

(two sessions plus a minimum of three days)

'Wild at Heart' is an intensive residential course that takes place in an outdoor rural/wilderness setting. This includes one preparatory session before departure, as well as a debrief session on return. During the course the participants each has an opportunity to tell their life-story, to identify what is holding them back, to let go of past hurts, to be able to move forward with an increased sense of hope and confidence. We use the natural surrounding as a place of challenge, meditation and reflection. We use nature, the seasons and elements, as a metaphor for the cycle of life, for transformation, healing, growth and development.

Course four: Taking a lead in life

(a minimum of four sessions)

This section focuses on building successful and mutually beneficial relationships. The starting point is that to become a leader in life, the first person you have to lead is yourself. Each session focuses on a different aspect of personal leadership. We explore the relationship you have with yourself and with other important people in your life:

@Communication: exploring what is possible in speaking and listening;

@Responsibility: giving up blame and taking control in your life;

@Commitment: being able to give and to keep your word;

@Support: allowing others to support you – giving support to others.

Course five: Leadership in action

(a minimum of four sessions)

Participants are encouraged to identify a project that will make a significant difference in their lives or in the lives of others. They are then assisted in the design of a clear action plan in order to be able to implement their personal project. They are also given specific coaching and support as their progress is monitored on a weekly basis.

The focus of these personal projects is:

@a project to develop yourself;

@a project to strengthen your family;

@a community-building project.

Course six: Mentoring in action

(a minimum of four sessions)

Key aspects of mentoring covered are:

@The concept and purpose of mentoring;

@The specific roles and responsibilities of a mentor;

@The mentoring contract: do's and don'ts;

@The mentoring ceremony: a public graduation for men who have successfully completed the training, and have been accepted as mentors.

Mentoring process – ongoing support

Mentors are given regular support over the period of their mentoring agreement, whilst they are in weekly ongoing sessions with a group of young men, the mentees. We recommend at least one separate mentor support session per month, a time just for mentors.

Additional training sessions might be added for mentors during the mentoring cycle, as and when necessary, for example, focusing on drug and alcohol addiction, living with HIV/Aids, working with violence, family support services.

Mentees from the first group (say 16- to 18-year-olds) could be encouraged to set up a mentoring support group for 10- to 13-year-old boys, within their community. They would thus gain experience in mentoring someone else, after having first been mentored.

Facilitation style and methodology

Our facilitation style varies as we move through the syllabus, starting very gently and with the focus being more generalised, to becoming more challenging as the focus becomes more personal. We adapt our style of facilitation depending on the content of a particular session or programme phase.

For example, if a participant is struggling to work through a change they are making in their life, the style might be quite rigorous and tough. If they are sharing a traumatic experience, the style might be empathetic and comforting.

We engage in a wide variety of techniques and methods, including: group discussions, personal sharing, storytelling, role-play, active exercises, experiential and outdoor activities, working in nature, solo work, ceremonies, individual coaching, conflict resolution, problem-solving, journaling and the creative arts, use of song, music and movement.

For more details refer to the chapters “Mentoring at work” (p103) and

“Facilitating the work” (p183).

Also refer to the Hearts of Men training manuals available to course participants. Each of the courses contained in these manuals is broken down into specific sessions, with key questions, exercises and facilitator notes.

Reflections on a journey into myself

The solo has been the most powerful and moving of all the experiences I have had in my short lifetime. I felt an astonishing closeness to nature. I realised that what I shared with the earth was overwhelming in its majesty and beauty. The closeness my ancestors had with the earth I shared in that instant. The moon rising over the quiet landscape awakened a deep spirituality in me. I stood in awe at this majestic sight and of the emotions stirring within me. Emotions so deep I had to scream out my joy in acknowledgement of my heritage as an African man whose forefathers roamed these same plains and mountains.

I felt free and at one with nature. I realised I am part of this universe. The universe is in me. I felt like a King, powerful, loved and respected. I was a King because I could see my ancestors loving and living on this earth, like I was doing right at that moment.

The moon signified the cleansing of my soul. In the night it brought light and a sense of quiet warmth. I could see clearly the jagged edges of mountain-tops, the humps of rocks strewn around, the low bushes and flowers waving at me in the breeze. Even in the darkness there was light.

(This is an extract from a piece of writing by an adult participant after his ‘Wild at Heart’ experience reflecting on his time spent on the ‘solo’ – out in the wilderness, overnight on his own.)

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Many years ago, an experienced mentor came to visit one of our programmes, to give us some further training and coaching.

The first question he asked the leadership team was,

“How are all the participant projects going?”

We replied that we hadn't started with them yet.

He commented, “Well you better get moving then, ‘cause the real work has yet to begin!”

He got us to appreciate the importance of this phase of the work, where all the training gets utilised and put into action, whereby each participant is challenged to follow through on what they say, and what they dream; to generate hope within themselves and others.

He emphasised that only when we see projects being implemented, will we know if our work is having the impact we desire. On the basis of this we can constantly monitor our effectiveness, and make necessary changes so we can improve what we do.

Chapter six

MEN TAKING ACTION

Taking action

The establishment of Hearts of Men first as a vision, then as a project with a specific programme, and finally as an organisation, is a perfect example of **men taking action**, in order to develop themselves, their families and their communities.

We encourage the same kind of social entrepreneurship amongst all participants in our programmes, to take considered action aiming to make a real difference. It must be purposeful, planned and focused in order to produce specific results. This is very different to random or spontaneous activity, however well meant such action may be.

Purpose of projects

The Hearts of Men training and mentoring process is geared towards men making a difference with other men and within the wider community. Specific projects are created to give both structure and focus to this activity.

Designing a project entails:

- @clarifying a personal or group vision;
- @developing clear purpose with specific aims;
- @structuring a step by step plan of action;
- @defining measurable outcomes;
- @taking measures to achieve sustainability;
- @determining a clear time frame.

The mentoring support process for a participant will focus on their project design and will monitor carefully the progress made, challenges faced, points

of conflict or obstacles present.

Having a clear project design in place means you have publically declared a commitment to achieve something, you can be supported, and you can be held accountable.

It makes a huge difference in the quality of action and results achieved, and in the focus of the mentoring support, having a clearly defined project from which to work.

Project focus

As part of the training in a typical Hearts of Men programme, we get each participant to focus on two initial projects. This process begins with each older man who is training to become a mentor, actively undertaking his own project/s, learning the implementation methodology and experiencing focused coaching and mentoring.

He will then provide this service to the young man/men whom he will be mentoring. The young men will also undertake the designing and implementation of their own projects.

The best coaches and mentors are those who have been empowered through the successful completion of their own projects, and have themselves witnessed positive changes within their own families and communities.

We go through **three steps** in this project implementation process:

Starting with yourself: a personal project;

Moving attention to your family: a family project;

Focusing on your community: a community project.

Step one

A personal project

Designing a project that is focused on improving an aspect of your life. It is just for you.

Examples of personal projects undertaken:

- @giving up or reducing smoking, drinking or drug intake;
- @getting back into education or acquiring a specific skill;
- @developing an exercise regime to get fit and lose weight;
- @entering counselling to deal with anger and violence.

Step two

A family project

Designing a project that is focused on improving an aspect or aspects in the life of your family.

Examples of family projects undertaken:

- @working out and implementing a family roster, whereby each member of the household shares in cooking and cleaning tasks;
- @deciding on specific ways in which a young man will assist his single parent in running the house;
- @reconnecting with members of the family to rebuild relationships;
- @creating a special celebration to reunite a divided family.

It is best if the project is achieved within the timeline of the training or programme participation agreement, so that the coaching and mentoring process can be practically achieved.

So for example, if a participant's family project is to reunite an extended family that has many conflicts and relationship breakdowns, it is advisable to break the larger project down into a few mini-projects, some of which can be achievable in the lifespan of the training.

Some larger projects might need a year or longer to complete, and some might be short-term, easily achievable within a month or so.

Once the personal and family projects are completed, we encourage participants to focus on a community project.

There is of course an immediate community project available to participants within the Hearts of Men programme itself, that is, to commit themselves to recruiting and mentoring a young man from their community into the ongoing Hearts of Men programme.

Step three

A community project

Designing a project that is focused on improving an aspect or aspects in the life of one's own community.

Examples of community projects undertaken:

- @setting up a weekly youth soccer tournament with each team based on a street by street basis, coached and managed by elders living in that street;
- @establishing an annual young men and women's programme within a high school, facilitated and managed by parents;
- @repairing and decorating communal toilet facilities;
- @facilitating a youth group to learn how to make their own African drums and forming a drumming circle.

A man and his broom

One of our facilitators was running a youth mentoring support programme in his community. When we asked him how he started recruiting he told us a remarkable story, remarkable in that we hadn't heard of someone using this technique before. It was so simple and yet so powerful.

He went out every evening, starting on the street in front of his family's house, each day moving around from street to street with a broom in his hands. He would start sweeping and slowly but surely a small group of young people would gather around him and engaging with him. They wanted to know what he was doing. "Cleaning up my streets," he replied. "But these are the council's streets," they said, "The council must clean up – not you." "But I live here," he replied. "This is my street and I want it to be clean. We must all help in keeping our place clean."

It did not take long before he had many a helping hand, and needed to go and find more brooms. The activity allowed him not only to begin a cleaning programme, but gave him the opportunity to recruit young people into his programme.

A World Cup every week!

The broom-sweeping initiative gradually developed into a community soccer tournament held each week on a Saturday. Each soccer team was selected from young men residing in a particular street. Each street was encouraged to enter a team that would be managed by an older man also living in that street.

The rules of engagement were clearly emphasised by the two referees: our Hearts of Men facilitator and his brother, a trained mentor on our programme. No swearing, good sportsmanship, no questioning the officials, no violence: yellow and red cards would be issued and teams disqualified if deemed unsporting.

Prizes and refreshments were raised from local businesses. There was much excitement each Saturday. The tournament brought the community together, with residents from each street coming out to support their team. Indeed it felt as if there was a World Cup being played each week! This community project is such a great example of what is possible with not many resources and just a little creativity.

Further development

Once the initial community projects are complete, the group can consider designing projects that could have an impact outside of their immediate community, for example connecting with another community, and providing a particular service or undertaking a combined community-building initiative. Cross-community projects can have a huge impact, in terms of building mutual understanding and opening up new channels of communication.

Possible step four

A cross-community project

Designing a project that is focused on bringing together members of different communities for mutual benefit.

Examples of these cross-community projects could be:

@bringing students from two different schools together to exchange ideas,

- create a partnership and share resources;
- @bringing members from different religious persuasions together to promote understanding and social cohesion;
- @initiating communication between two conflicting communities and promoting co-operation;
- @designing a youth arts festival including young people from different cultural/social backgrounds.

Benefits of projects

Through our experience we have witnessed many benefits generated from the implementation of a project. Some of these are:

- @experiencing success generates confidence and further motivation to do something: suddenly what might have seemed impossible now seems possible;
- @others who witness your success get inspired to do the same. In this way your project generates energy and a sense of hope in others;
- @young men successfully contributing to their community or school, can change negative perceptions towards themselves, from trouble-makers to community-builders;
- @skills development in the areas of strategic planning, time management, co-ordination, team-building, leadership development, dealing with conflict, reflection and evaluation;
- @substantial differences can be made in the spheres of family and social cohesion, relationship-building, community safety, conflict resolution, quality of life and sense of general wellbeing;
- @having the implementation of tangible projects included as part of our programmes, assists us in terms of evaluating and assessing the impact of our work.

A VERY UNLIKELY PAIRING

We recall a mentor relationship that was mutually beneficial. It took place in a Youth At Risk mentoring programme that included both women and men.

A middle-aged white woman who worked as a magistrate, and was volunteering on the programme, and a young black man who was a participant, seemed a very unlikely pairing. Not many people thought it would work, but it proved to be one of the best mentorship combinations in that particular programme.

At the closing ceremony the woman spoke of her amazing experiences with the young man. She shared what she had learnt about life in his community and the challenges facing many young black men. She said that when next a young man appears before her in court, she would now have a very different appreciation of where he was coming from, and factors to take into consideration before sentencing. She thanked him for the contribution he had made in her life, one that she would never forget.

He in turn spoke powerfully of his experiences being introduced into her world. She had taken him to the ballet and to the opera, things he had never experienced before. He spoke of the enhanced perspective and understanding he had gained by being able to look outside of his own community and what was familiar to him. He thanked her for enriching his life, and widening his vision. He requested for their friendship to continue.

Chapter seven

MENTORING AT WORK

There is an old Hebrew saying:

“God couldn’t be everywhere, so he created mothers.”

At Hearts of Men we have our own adapted version of this:

“God couldn’t be everywhere, so he created mentors.”

As you will have noted in the previous chapters that introduce our work, mentoring underpins all that we do. It is a vital part component in the design and implementation of the Hearts of Men approach. In this chapter we will give a thorough description of the many different aspects to mentoring.

Meaning of the word ‘mentor’

All the major world religions have developed and practised systems of mentorship: the guru, the pedagogue, discipleship and apprenticeship.

The concept of mentoring has existed at least since ancient Greek times. The derivation of the role of mentor comes from Homer’s epic, *The Odyssey*, where Odysseus entrusted a close friend, Mentor, with the education of his son, Telemachus, while Odysseus was away at the war against Troy.

The Greek word ‘mentos’ means intent, purpose, spirit and passion. In Sanskrit the word ‘man-tar’ means ‘one who thinks’. These words sum up how we would describe the role of a mentor within Hearts of Men programmes.

Other common dictionary descriptions of mentor are “a trusted counsellor, a guide, tutor or coach, someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a less experienced colleague, a wise advisor.”

We refer to the person receiving mentorship as a ‘mentee’.

Mentoring and support

What do we mean when we describe the mentoring relationship, as being one whereby the mentor gives support to the mentee?

Understanding the difference between 'supporting' someone or 'helping' and 'rescuing' them is crucial to successful mentoring. Hearts of Men puts mentoring structures in place in order to provide the necessary support for young people, in order for them to better themselves, contribute to their families and make a positive impact on their surroundings.

The essence of support is empowerment. Empowering the mentee to make effective decisions, to create a vision for themselves, to plan carefully, to follow through on what they say. The mentor doesn't do it all for the mentee; they are encouraged to do things for themselves, with some support and guidance.

Often when we help or rescue someone, we provide everything: whether it be a solution, or finance, or materials.

In a mentoring relationship, the mentee is guided to come up with their own solutions, and is supported to find ways in which to raise the necessary finance or materials in order to accomplish their goals.

The mentor is not a helper (however kind this role sometimes is, for example, assisting someone to cross the road) or a rescuer (however necessary this role sometimes is, for example, saving someone from a fire).

It is important for mentors as part of their training and preparation, to understand the distinction between these different functions. The helper helps, but does not empower. The rescuer rescues, but does not empower. The mentors support the mentee to achieve great things by themselves, or support the mentees as a group to achieve great things together. Empowerment, rather than dependency, lies at the heart of mentoring.

The potential power in the mentoring relationship

Mentoring should ultimately benefit both sides, in other words both the mentor and the mentee gaining satisfaction and inspiration through the partnership. In this chapter we give some practical examples of the dynamic

relationship that can exist between mentor and mentee.

So what exactly is mentoring?

The precise definition of mentoring is elusive. What we can say is that it encompasses all of the above. It is relationship-based, is built on clear communication, and most importantly, it is ongoing. It involves learning, dialogue, questioning and challenge.

The specific role of a mentor often gets confused with that of a coach, a guide, a teacher, advisor, counsellor, father-figure or supervisor. Indeed a mentor is often engaged in one of these roles. In order to understand the difference between these roles, it is good to examine what they each do.

Mentor as coach

Taking a sports coach, for example. His key role is to develop the technique and skills of individual players, and the performance of the team as a whole. Coaching is very specific, it is skills and performance based. When a mentor is supporting a mentee in his personal, family or community project, he will, for that specific task, take on the role of a coach.

Mentor as guide

Take a wilderness guide, for example. His key role is to lead the way in terms of direction, safety and when appropriate, share his knowledge and experience of the environment with participants. There will be times when a mentor gives guidance to his mentee, in terms of direction and safety in his life, and share his life experience with the younger man.

Mentor as teacher

Taking a teacher, for example, his key role is to impart specific knowledge, encourage ongoing learning, guiding the student through a particular subject or skill. There could well be times when the mentor is taking on a teaching role. If the mentor's skill is accountancy or bookkeeping, for example, he might be teaching and guiding mentees in budgeting and managing money.

Mentor as supervisor

Taking a supervisor, for example, his key role is to supervise, oversee and hold to account the person being supervised. This normally takes place within a work context and the supervisor is usually senior to those being supervised. In running a mentorship programme, the mentors might well have to be supervised by someone more experienced, such as a team leader, to hold them accountable and to give specific feedback in order to improve the mentoring service being provided.

Mentor as advisor

Some of us love giving advice to others. While a mentor might be requested to give specific or technical advice on occasion, this is not his primary function. Care must be taken when giving advice and what the consequences of this might be, as the mentee might very well act on your advice. The focus of the mentorship process should rather be to develop the mentees own ability to come up with their own solutions, meaning, to be an advisor to themselves.

Mentor as counsellor

As a mentor you will sometimes be using counselling skills such as listening, feeding back, showing empathy. A mentee might on occasion share intimate and confidential information with his mentor. Most mentors are not trained as counsellors, and it is wise to remember this, and preferably to refer a mentee for counselling if required, to a suitably qualified and experienced person, for example in situations of domestic violence, abuse, or addiction.

Mentor as a father-figure

A mentor is also not a parent replacement. You might be seen as a father-figure, but it is important to remember you are not that young man's father. Sometimes these roles get confused and distort the mentor/mentee relationship. A young man could be looking for a father, and likewise a mentor might take on this role because he is looking for a son. A mentor does fulfill an important function in the life of a young man, especially when there is

no father or elder around.

When someone refers to their coach or teacher as a mentor-figure in their life, they are suggesting that the person takes on a greater role than just teaching or coaching; often listening, guiding and/or advising on matters beyond their immediate brief. You often hear people describing someone as a father-figure in their life. This suggests someone who was there for them in times of need, who always showed an interest in how they were doing in their lives, who gave them support.

Mentoring can encompass all or some of the above. It is good to be aware of these different roles, and when you are practising each one. As a mentor, it is important to not be stuck in one particular role.

The mentor relationship is in some ways a very simple relationship, but it can also be a very complex one, depending on what both parties bring to the relationship. Mentorship training is essential and is referred to under the heading in this chapter “Managing mentors.”

Why mentoring?

When designing our intervention, we asked ourselves the question: What is the best way to provide ongoing community based oversight and support to programme participants?

When studying the effects of community interventions and various training and transformative programmes, we discovered that the essential element in successful peer group and individual behaviour change is the ability to follow through, to sustain the initial shifts and commitments made to do things differently. When participants return to their homes and to their streets, to the same circumstances, ongoing support structures need to be in place to monitor progress, inspire and guide.

This is where mentoring comes in. Mentors bear witness; they observe, they see what is happening and they encourage, they hold mentees to account. They provide a structure and shape to ongoing programme activity and support, and are a key component in the successful completion of community building projects.

As mentioned before, one of the aims of Hearts of Men was to close the gap

between older men and younger men, between older fathers and young fathers. Mentoring was seen as a structured and productive way in which to close this gap, and bring the two groups closer together; in understanding and in practical engagement with a specific purpose.

How does mentoring fit into a young man's life?

As mentioned earlier (*in the chapter "Working with young men" – p61*) it is very important for a young man to bond with his mother in the first seven years of his life. This is metaphorically referred to as the boy entering the 'house' of his mother.

For the second seven years or so (say eight to 14 years of age) it is seen as important for the boy to bond with his father. This is metaphorically referred to as the boy now entering the 'house' of his father. In this phase the boy begins the separation process with his mother.

The role of a mentor or mentor-figures becomes significant in the next phase of a young man's life (say from about 15 to 21 years of age). This is metaphorically referred to as the boy now entering the 'house' of his mentor. In this phase the boy begins the separation process with his father. He is searching for other guides and teachers, outside of his immediate parents. This is both appropriate and essential.

In the next phase, say from 22 years onwards, the young adult man is now ready to enter his own 'house' as it were, to journey towards becoming himself: to realising his dreams, his potential. Of course the mentoring process can well continue as the young man continue his manhood journey into adulthood and elder-hood. Specialist advisors and spiritual mentors are often part of this phase in a man's life.

Qualities we look for in our mentors

To be responsible

– a man who is reliable, who does what he says he is going to do, who is punctual, is always prepared, and who doesn't make excuses;

To be functional

– a man who has reasonable stability in his home and personal life, who is well on his way to overcoming challenges he has faced;

To be trustworthy

– a man who does not carry a reputation for criminality, violence and abuse, a man you can count on to uphold the values of the programme, and to be an example to others;

To be reflective

– a man who can/has learnt from his mistakes and who is aware of what he needs to work on to succeed in life, a man who is open to being supported.

The mentor training process (*as described in chapter “Our men’s training” (p83)*) is a perfect opportunity in which to assess these four key qualities. During this time we look at each participant’s attendance, participation, behaviour and character. We see how they handle their emotions, their clarity of speaking and listening skills, their punctuality, being challenged and being open for learning. By the time it comes to selecting mentors at the conclusion of the initial training, the facilitators have a good idea of each participant’s suitability for the role.

Mentoring models and styles

There are several different examples of mentoring models and styles that can be used:

Community-based mentoring

Some mentoring programmes draw their mentors and mentees from a wide area, say citywide, that is, across many neighbourhoods and communities. This has an advantage in terms of recruitment, having to reach specific targets.

Our programmes are normally based within a specific community and neighbourhood. Recruitment only takes place within that geographical area. This means that the majority of mentors come from the same community as the mentees. Thus the mentors understand local conditions and are normally within walking distance of each other, and their mentees. Ease of access and proximity can significantly enhance the mentoring process.

Whilst we facilitate a community-based approach to recruitment, we are always open to a few men from outside the host community giving service. We have had men from other backgrounds, cultures and countries joining the mentoring process. This has had many benefits for all involved, enriching the programme and exposing participants to a diversity of views and lifestyles.

Formal mentoring

Many effective mentoring relationships are informal, i.e. they are not defined by a structure, clear agreements or regular meetings. Informal mentoring happens spontaneously, for example by a teacher or a sports coach.

Given that Hearts of Men works in communities in which young participants, both old and young, are facing sometimes extremely difficult living conditions and life challenges, we have adopted a formal approach, in which our mentoring relationships are built within a very clear support structure.

See section 'Managing mentors' below, for more details.

Longer-term mentoring

Some effective formal mentoring processes are short term in duration. An example of this would be a young man wanting to learn how to build an African drum, and he approaches a man in the community whom he knows is skilled in this area. The man might then mentor him over a period of two weeks or more, until the process is complete.

As mentioned already, our mentoring is longer-term in duration in order to see through multiple tasks and possible life changes.

Commitment-based mentoring

Informal mentoring is needs-based and spontaneous. Formal mentoring is commitment-based and intentional.

The first commitment a man makes is to participate in the Hearts of Men training. On completion, if he is selected and he wishes to continue, he makes a commitment to serve as a mentor for a minimum period of say nine months to one year.

A young man also makes a commitment of one year to partake in the mentorship programme. As part of his training he commits himself to three projects, to improve and strengthen himself, his family and his community.

The key focus of the mentoring relationship is for the mentee to deliver good results on these three commitments. The mentor supports his mentee by keeping him focused, confident and intentional. Of course, as the mentoring relationship develops, the mentor might well offer support in other ways.

Another organisation refers to its mentors as committed partners. They have a saying that goes, “I am committed to your commitment.” We have adopted this approach, which focuses on the core relationship between mentor and mentee, and is goal-orientated. The notion is that with the completion of personal projects, the experience of keeping to one’s commitment builds confidence, hope and success.

Group-based mentoring

Some mentoring projects focus on one-to-one mentoring. A specific mentor is appointed for each mentee. They meet on an individual basis at a mutually agreed time.

We have adopted a group-based mentoring approach. Mentors and mentees meet all together, say on a weekly basis, at a designated venue and time. Structured sessions are held which will include individual and small-group mentoring work. In this way it is easy to monitor overall attendance and participation. It also means that if a specific mentor is unavailable due to illness, work or family, the mentoring process can continue uninterrupted.

As described elsewhere (*in the chapter “Circles of Men” – p51*) we structure the mentors/mentees into small working groups with a leadership structure, for example 10 participants, that is five mentors plus five mentees.

We do our best to match up the numbers, but in some programmes we might have say 10 mentors managing 18 mentees. In this way the group-based process always works, as we have enough cover.

Another advantage of working in a group environment is that participants can learn from one another's experiences, and each individual can receive a diversity of input and support. The group-based approach doesn't exclude mentors and mentees being paired up.

Group-based mentoring also provides a safety net for Hearts of Men as an organisation, for all the mentors and mentees, in terms of any accusations of inappropriate behaviour, physical and sexual abuse. In other words participants are not encouraged to work or meet in isolation.

Continual mentoring

Some programmes focus just on the current mentoring relationship. We believe in continual mentoring, which suggests that the mentee will be encouraged to pass on the experience that he has received. So an older man goes through the training and receives mentorship. He then in turn takes on a younger man (say 18 years old) and mentors him. The young man can then be encouraged, as part of his community project, to set up a mentorship support programme for young boys (say eight to 10 years old).

We work on the same basis in staff facilitator training. Each facilitator receives mentoring by a more experienced facilitator, at each stage of his development, from participant to intern, from assistant to lead facilitator. Engaging with a mentor/s, can be seen as a lifelong process.

Refer to the chapter "Facilitating the work" (p183).

Voluntary mentoring

Hearts of Men mentors are volunteers. These are men who give up their time in service to their own communities. This helps to make the programme sustainable in terms of containing operating expenses. A disadvantage is that mentors sometimes have to miss sessions in order to do paid work, or might have to withdraw from the programme when they get a new job or change jobs. Mentees also get to appreciate the fact that their mentor is giving up his

precious time in service. We always hope this sets an example, and serves to inspire others to do the same.

We know of a mentorship programme that pays its mentors a monthly wage. These men oversee households where there is no father and/or parents available. The mentors escort the children of the household safely to and from school each day, supervise homework each afternoon and oversee the cooking of the evening meal. They are also on call in case of any emergency with that specific household. In this case the mentoring relationship is structured as an employment opportunity for unemployed men in that community.

Managing mentors

Recruiting and engaging with mentors is time-consuming and challenging. Managing and guiding the mentorship process, is vital for the successful outcome of the whole exercise.

Application

Each participant completes an application form. This includes all normal personal details, plus medical history, education, work and life experience, hobbies and specific skills, criminal record and any possible challenges with addiction/violence and so on.

Manhood training

Each prospective mentor first needs to go through the designated training. Then a selection process takes place.

Mentor-specific training

For those chosen and who choose to continue, the final piece of training is mentor-specific. It covers mentoring in all its aspects: what, why, where, when and how. A list of do's and don'ts is shared. This gives clear guidelines as to expected mentor behaviour. An outline and a structure for a typical mentoring session are given.

Mentorship agreement and graduation

There is also the signing of a mentor agreement which includes all responsibilities and programme details. On completion of the mentor training, a mentor graduation ceremony takes place. Each graduate receives a certificate and speaks to the invited audience sharing his specific commitments. This is publically written down and signed as part of his mentor agreement.

Mentoring commences

The mentors are then introduced to the mentees and the next phase of the mentoring process begins. Alternatively, mentors might well be involved in the actual recruitment of the mentees themselves as part of their community-building project.

Ongoing mentor support

Mentors will be divided into working teams, each with its own leader. These leaders will receive ongoing guidance and support from a mentor manager. It is recommended that monthly mentor support meetings be held separately from mentees, so that the older group of men can discuss personal matters and receive further training input where necessary.

Continuing to serve

Retaining some experienced mentors to assist with and manage the second year of any programme is essential for future growth and development. We work on the basis that each year each participant takes a step up in leadership.

Copies of all mentor application documents, agreements, and guidelines, are available in the relevant Hearts of Men training manuals.

Mentoring across the generations

A very experienced programme lead facilitator was nearing the end of his

career. He had a great reputation for innovative ways of working and empowering people. He was a man who had devoted his life in service of others.

As part of a training process, he was teamed up with a younger facilitator at the early stages of his career. They were working together on a residential mentoring programme with young people at risk. The younger man looked up to his mentor as a role model, and certainly wanted to become like him one day. All that he witnessed was the amazing skills, wealth of experience and strong presence of the older man. What he didn't know was what it had cost his mentor to have achieved and given all that he had.

The mentor took an interest in the younger facilitator and suggested they spend some time together during their breaks. He wanted to know what the young man's dreams and ambitions were. He asked about his domestic situation. He discovered the young man was recently married and had a young baby. He could tell that his younger colleague was torn between wanting to be at home with his wife and child, and desiring to work as hard as possible on his career development, which inevitably would mean time away from family and increasing demands at work.

The older man decided to share his story with his mentee. He spoke of his incredible gratitude with respect to all the individuals and communities he had been privileged to work with, and the many wonderful places he had been able to see on his travels. He then spoke of how all this had impacted on his personal life, how his marriage had broken down, and shared his greatest regret of all: not being there for his daughter and not really knowing her. He had missed out on one of the greatest joys in life, of parenting and watching his child grow up. Now that he was facing retirement he felt lonely and empty.

His guidance to the younger man was to always put his family first. His marriage relationship and parenting had to be the priorities, and only then work. On reflection the young man expressed surprise at what he had received from this mentoring relationship. He had expected skills and techniques, but had received personal clarity and a re-shifting of his goals and priorities instead. He now says these lessons have had a profound and positive impact on his family life.

Sticking to one's commitment against all the odds

We remember a story concerning a mentor's experience on a specific programme. After all the initial training had been completed, he committed to work with his mentee once a week for the year ahead. The young man being mentored never pitched to any mentor meetings. All follow-up phone calls from the mentor to the mentee were left unanswered, or if answered the mentor was told in no uncertain terms to leave the young man alone.

But the mentor had made an agreement to keep participating in the programme. This he did. He participated every week in the group meetings even though his mentee didn't show up. He felt disheartened when listening to how well most of the other mentors and mentees were doing. But nevertheless he continued to put a weekly call to his unresponsive mentee.

A remarkable thing happened at the closing ceremony held at the end of the programme, to acknowledge achievements and to give thanks to the contributions individuals had made. The missing mentee was invited and showed up, taking his supposed mentor completely by surprise. During the ceremony the young man stood up and asked his mentor to also rise. He said he would like to acknowledge the contribution his mentor has had on his life. The mentor was shocked as he had the view that he had contributed nothing, as they never met.

The young man shared that his father had abandoned him as a young child, and that he had never been able to trust older men. So he decided to test his mentor, an older man. How long would it take for his mentor to give up on him, if he kept pushing him away? He shared with the gathering that his mentor called him every week without fail, even when he refused to speak with him, and to top it all the young man said he was rude and disrespectful to his mentor.

But the older man never gave up on him. The mentee shared that what he had learnt from the programme is the power of commitment. When a man gives his word he keeps it. He also discovered that he must be worth something, if another man kept contacting him to offer his support, and to let him know that he was there for him. He ended his sharing with describing his

mentor as the perfect mentor for him. Now he felt it was possible to start trusting older men and letting them back into his life.

The mentor and everyone involved learnt that sometimes we never know the impact we are having, even if at the time it appears as if absolutely nothing is happening.

WHAT IS A PROGRAMME?

There is no correct answer to the question: What is a programme?

A programme can be whatever we say it can be.

A programme's potential, or lack thereof, is defined entirely by those who create it.

Chapter eight

DESIGNING PROGRAMMES

This chapter is a guide to the thinking behind the Hearts of Men programme design process. There is an old saying that goes, “God is in the details.” Taking care of a multitude of details is what makes a programme successful. Seeing that these details are considered in the design process is critical. There is another old saying that goes, “If you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail.” We see working on the design as part of a methodical preparation process.

Where to begin

When we think of implementing a programme, we tend to focus on what resources are needed, what the content will be, and its facilitation requirements. These are of course important factors to consider.

But before starting to shape a specific programme, we would recommend first developing a clear set of design criteria to use, in very much the same way an architect or engineer would approach a building project. Having design instruments and a design checklist available, can lead to a more effective and productive process in the creation of a new programme.

Programmes are created for many different reasons. Some could be:

- @an intervention in a specific situation;
- @to provide a specific opportunity for people;
- @a means to achieve a specific goal.

A programme’s focus could target any one of the above, or it could encompass all three.

These are some of the possibilities we say a programme can be: multi-layered, transformational and aspirational, multi-purposed, multi-focused, multi-dimensional, multi-resourced, holistic, taking participants on a journey,

through a process, an active experience.

All of these will be briefly explained in this chapter. Each can be used as a design tool when working on developing different aspects of a programme.

A programme is a creation

Creating a programme is like designing a three-dimensional (3D) image: it needs to have breadth, length and depth.

We identify three stages in this creative process:

DEFINE and DESIGN

This stage includes the broad scope of a programme, our vision, our intention, aims and objectives, overall structure, our methods, style and content.

DELIVER and DEVELOP

This stage includes specific location, timeline, actual facilitation and participation, continual improvement and development of delivery, style and content.

DEMONSTRATE and DISSEMINATE

This stage includes showing how it works, clarifying its impact, sharing results, gaining further support for future programmes, spreading the message and influencing others.

These stages are all handled prior to the commencement of the actual programme delivery. It is a mistake to design stage by stage, for example to only consider the evaluation process when the programme is already up and running, or after it is complete.

A programme is multi-layered

Successful programmes are normally multi-layered and thus complex operations to manage. Hearts of Men programmes focus on an individual, their family, as well as their community; thus there are three layers to pay attention to, often simultaneously. The design has to take cognisance of all these dimensions.

A programme needs a recruitment strategy, an entry/engagement point, a

consolidation phase, and a completion process. It also needs evaluative processes, facilitator mentoring, as well as ongoing staff- training and development in place. These can also be seen as multiple layers and phases within the programme design.

The art to all this complexity is to keep things simple; to have clear objectives, detailed planning, and well-managed systems in place.

A programme is transformational and aspirational

Many programmes are designed around the question “What’s wrong?” Only addressing what’s wrong can seriously limit the potential and impact. A better question to ask is “What’s missing?” In this way we are aspiring to something rather than trying to fix something.

For example, a unit in a young offenders’ institution is experiencing high levels of bullying, intimidation and self-harm. In designing an intervention we focused on what was missing in the environment, rather than getting hooked into controlling the bullying. We identified that a sense of community was missing, that support was missing, and that opportunities to encourage leadership and the taking of responsibility were missing.

This is a very different approach to say making one or two changes, for example putting up cameras to monitor the situation, and increasing staff on patrols. While these changes might assist in controlling aggressive and violent behaviour, they do little to transform or empower the young men themselves. These changes are external to the core issues.

Transformation aims to change the form of something, the way in which we conduct our relationships, the way in which we think of ourselves and others. Transformation is an internal process that can lead to a different set of outcomes; when people shift the way they approach the situation, and when new opportunities are available to them. Often changes taken in isolation don’t prevent the problem behaviour or situation from re-occurring. Transforming the core dynamics of a situation must be the target of any effective intervention.

A programme is multi-purposed

We give an example here of a programme with four clear intentions. We refer to such a programme as being multi-purposed. Being specific about the purpose of the work provides the design process with a clear pathway. We refer to this multi-purpose design tool as our 'ABC' that stands for: **ability, behaviour, creativity and doing**.

ABILITY - It is a skills-based programme focusing on developing specific abilities. The participants will be more able and have enhanced skills on completion of the programme.

BEHAVIOUR - It is a relationship-based programme focusing on transforming specific behaviour. The participants will transform the way they behave and relate to themselves and others.

CREATIVITY - It is a potential-based programme focusing on enhancing and increasing creativity. The participants will learn to choose for themselves and create more opportunities in their lives.

DOING - It is an action-based programme focusing on putting developed skills, specific behaviour and creativity into action. By doing this, participants will demonstrate their abilities to themselves and others.

A programme is multi-focused

Programmes need to reflect the complex nature of human beings. Humans by nature do not focus on one thing only. For example, a human being can live in all three time frames at the same time. We are often trapped in, thinking about, worried about, dreaming about the **past, the present, the future**, all in the same moment.

When working with both adult and young men, it is more effective if we include a multi-focus into our design, so we find a way in which to work with the three time periods. Focusing only on the past for example, would produce limited results.

But focusing on the past, in relation to the present and the future, has a far greater impact on how the individual understands their life experience.

Focus questions that underpin this approach are:

How can we learn from the past, but not be trapped in the past?
How can we create a future that is not determined by the past?
How can we bring our vision of the future into the present?

Using this multi-focused approach, we build our content around these key questions:

Who am I: what got me here?

Who are you: what do you mean to me?

Where am I: what is keeping me here?

Where am I going: where else could I go?

A programme is multi-dimensional

Human beings have many dimensions that shape their character and personality. When designing transformational programmes for men it is important to take all these dimensions into consideration. We call this tool the Spice of Life test. We use it to check that all these vital human ingredients are being included:

Social: how we relate to people; to groups and to the world;

Psychological: how we think about ourselves, others, family, the world; the impact of our thoughts on our choices;

Intellectual: thinking creatively, discovering, exploring, questioning and inquiring;

Cultural: a sense of history, valuing cultural roots, understanding what connects us;

Emotional: how we feel about ourselves, family, the world, the impact our feelings have on self and others.

It is important that our programmes contribute in some way to each of these dimensions. This enables us to relate to the person as a whole, and to not isolate a specific part of their being.

Each dimension is underpinned with a quality; when a man engages with these qualities we know the dimensions identified are coming alive:

Spiritual: a sense of self/spirit/soul, living with purpose;

Potential: self-belief, living in a world full of possibility;

Inspiration: living a life of intention, sense of direction;
Community: experiencing a sense of community, support;
Expression: self-expression, freedom, acknowledgement.

A programme is multi-resourced

Programmes work best by bringing together a combination of resources that in conjunction with one another as a whole produce results.

An example of some resources on which a programme can draw:

Community – mobilising support and managing locally;

Volunteers – drawing on local expertise and energy;

Family – parents, siblings, extended family, guardians;

Strategic partnerships – nonprofit organisations, community-based organisations, state departments, religious bodies, schools, networks;

Business sector – funding, goods, venues, equipment, transport, administration/management/financial expertise;

Academic institutions – research, evaluation, training;

Access opportunities/networks – into employment, housing, further education, healthcare, legal services;

Media – dissemination of ideas, policy directions, activism.

A programme takes participants on a journey

The best programmes tend to be experiential, meaning an active experience; encouraging active participation. Someone once said “values are caught, not taught.”

We like to see a programme as a journey. It is something each participant has to go through and experience. It is best when the facilitators have undertaken the particular journey themselves before leading others.

The concept of a programme being a journey, can be useful as a design tool.

Key components to be considered when designing a journey

are:

The starting point - what is going on in the lives of participants before they start the journey;

The destination - knowing where we are heading on this particular journey;

The signposts - clarifying each stage of the journey;

The people - who is coming on the journey and what are their specific roles;

The safety net - creating an environment in which participants can flourish and be taken care of;

The resources - seeing that everything needed, all practicalities are in place;

The preparation - agreements, commitments, information;

The compass - clear direction, goals, values, protocols;

The beginning - how we will start the journey;

The end - how we will end the journey;

The reflection - how we will learn from this journey.

A programme takes participants through a process

A journey is underpinned by a process, a set of rituals, practices, which form part of the language and group culture within the programme, and hopefully part of the everyday life of participants after the conclusion of the programme.

Key components of a process can be:

Joining - going through the necessary steps to join;

Belonging - building sense of ownership and identification;

Listening - creating an environment where people listen and are listened to;

Storytelling - creating a space within which people can share their life experiences;

Completing - letting go and moving on;

Cooperating - creating a community of combined action;

Discovering - how to improve and strengthen oneself;

Practising - putting learning and new skills into action;
Nurturing - checking the wellbeing of oneself and others;
Supporting - asking for, giving and receiving support;
Acknowledging - what is and what is not working;
Achieving - sharing one's own achievements and others';
Recognising - valuing one's own and others' contributions;
Leaving - going through the necessary steps to completion.

*The information in this chapter first appeared in the following publications:
Through the Walls by Nic Fine (Community Law Centre, University of the
Western Cape, South Africa, 1996) and From Violence to Resilience by Jo
Broadwood and Nic Fine (Leap Confronting Conflict/Jessica Kingsley
Publications, London UK, 2011.*

PART THREE

THE PARTNERSHIPS – strengthening the heart

Our partners – how we strengthen our
work
by working with others

SHOW ME A GOOD MAN AND I'LL MARRY HIM!

We were attending an information meeting hosted by a local school, as part of mentor recruitment for one of our community programmes. Tellingly the room was full of women. When we asked how we should go about attracting potential mentors into the programme, they shouted out, "What do you mean? We are all here!"

We thanked them for attending and went on to explain that we needed the mentors to be men in this particular programme. There was a roar of laughter! Clearly we had suggested something that was quite amusing. Our host, the school principal, exclaimed, "There are no good men here. Show me a good man and I'll marry him!" Once again the packed room erupted in laughter.

After a while the room settled down and the women all committed to finding potential men and inviting them to our meeting the following week.

In the car park outside I noticed the principal heading for a car with a man inside, waiting. I went over to thank her, and she introduced me to her husband. He said to me he always accompanies his wife to evening meetings, to see that she gets home safely. I joked with her that I thought there were no good men around. She told me that there was only one, and that she had married him!

After a couple of weeks the women could excuse themselves; they had left us with a room full of men who would begin the mentorship training. In this scenario the women of the community played a vital role in supporting us in identifying potential male participants. What motivated them was that they saw the possibilities in this initiative, that our work with men and young men, would ultimately be of benefit to them as women, as mothers and as daughters.

Chapter nine

WORKING WITH WOMEN

Why we focus first on working with men

It is inevitable that some might find our primary focus on working with men exclusive and separatist. However, working together with women, and around issues of men relating to women, always forms a core focus in our work. Our starting point is just different.

We know that men's relationships with women are fundamental to the success of marriages, families and communities. Our methodology is to focus first on a man's relationship with himself. In most instances in which a man is abusive or inappropriate towards women, the root causes lie deep within himself. We know that if we are to facilitate a change amongst men, we must first focus on the man himself.

It is a mistake when working with men, to jump immediately to gender issues and relationships with women. Often we are requested to do so in situations where there has been sexist behaviour. We have found a quick-fix approach is doomed to failure.

And what about women?

In the early years when we were establishing Hearts of Men, some of the most frequently asked questions were: What about women? What about young girls? How can you exclude women from your programmes?

We explained that with our limited resources and with the huge demand, we couldn't do everything, and that working with men and young men had to be our key priority and focal point. We have always held to the intention that our work should ultimately be of benefit to women.

By working with men and young men we were intending to make a positive contribution by hopefully altering men's perspectives and behaviour in terms of their relationship to their partners, families, marriage, parenting and children.

In retrospect, we realise we made a key assumption when we began our work: that there were many programmes, projects and support services for women and young girls, certainly more than were available to men. Through our engagement within several communities, we began to realise that sadly this was not necessarily the case.

Some lessons we have learnt

- @ There are very few similar services available to women and young girls at community level.
- @ It is difficult for a young man to change his behaviour in a vacuum, without his girlfriend/s and peer group altering their approach.
- @ It is difficult for a husband to change, without his wife also understanding where he is coming from.
- @ Fathers play a vital role in the development of their daughters.
- @ Young couples need guidance and support in the early years of their relationships, marriages, child rearing and parenting.

So we are now beginning to move towards a more holistic approach, working with families, fathers and daughters, young women and couples.

The contribution of women to the work of Hearts of Men

Whilst we have been primarily a men's organisation, we have always recognised the necessity of having input from women at all levels of our work development and decision-making processes. Over the years women have served on the Hearts of Men Management Board, held full-time staff management positions, as well as part-time facilitation posts. Wives, partners and mothers are actively included in programmes through feedback sessions and ceremonies.

More recently our first Hearts of Women pilot programme was initiated and led by two women on the Hearts of Men staff team.

Frequently asked questions regarding men's and women's programmes

@Why separate men and women in the first place?

@What is the importance of men and women having access to separate programmes?

@Isn't it vital for men and women to be working together?

@Isn't there a strong case for having a joint programme?

Our response to these questions is that there is a time to be separate as men and women, and a time when we should come together. This avoids an 'either this **or** that' type of response, and we rather embrace a 'both this **and** that' approach.

This gives rise to a further two questions:

@When is it appropriate for men and women to be working, creating programmes, apart?

@When is it appropriate for men and women to be working, running programmes, together?

The case for a men's or boys' programme

When men gather it will usually be to focus on a specific activity, for example playing or watching sport, or taking part in a recreational activity.

Creating a specific time and space for men to come together to focus on what it means to be a man, husband, father or son today can be hugely beneficial.

Many men use women as their main source of emotional support.

Participating in a men's circle can give a man a new experience in gaining support from other men.

In a context of a co-educational school, for instance, it can be beneficial to create an opportunity at an appropriate age, for the young men and young

women to participate separately in a programme. Conversations of a personal nature to men and women concerning issues of masculinity, femininity and sexuality can often be more productive and open in separate circles.

Sometimes the case for an exclusively men's or boys' programme is context-specific. For example, if a young man has spent his whole life in the company of other young men at a single-sex school, his need for participating in a single-sex programme could be questioned, unless the programme aimed to give him a broader and possibly different perspective of masculinity and manhood to that he had previously experienced.

An exclusive setting provides an opportunity for young men to ask specific questions of older men. It also provides an opportunity for older men to share their experiences of life, relationships and marriage with younger men.

The case for a women's or girls' programme

The case for women's programmes are very similar to those stated for men earlier. It is important for women, as it is for men, to find their own inner identity and not be defined by or reliant upon their relationship to the opposite gender. For women to spend time on their own, is equally as important as it is for men to do so. There are important conversations for women to have together in a confidential and safe environment, for example regarding menstruation, menopause and sexual health.

An integration model – men and women coming together

One example of fusing both approaches (that is, co-educational combined work and separate gender work) is to start the programme separately. That means working with a young women's programme and a young men's programme, working side by side. They are planned together by the men's and women's facilitation teams, they start at the same time, they have the same objectives and overall structural design. They take the same amount of time and follow broadly the same processes.

Once these separate programmes are complete, the two circles either

become one circle, or there is an agreement to do particular work together. In this way one can integrate the learning and facilitate cross-gender conversations in a way that might not have been possible before the programme.

Hearts of Men has many years of experience being involved in running these integrated processes in a co-ed school environment. The Grade 10 students split for the week of the residential programme; the young men going away with a team of male facilitators, and the young women going away with a team of female facilitators.

The young men's programme begins with a mother's ceremony during which each mother or invited woman blesses her young man on his journey into manhood, and presents him with a symbolic gift and a special message. The young men's programme ends with a father ceremony during which the father or invited man of each young man, welcomes him into the circle of men, and presents him with a symbolic gift and special message.

Exactly the same happens with the young women, but just the other way round. The fathers bless their daughters at the leaving ceremony, and the mothers welcome their daughters into the circle of women at the welcoming back ceremony.

After the week's process, the two groups come together and the young men and women spend a day sharing their experiences and learning from one another.

There is great potential for developing this process with more in-depth work between the groups focusing on issues such as relationships, sex, differences between women and men, and giving each other mutual support.

Hearts of Men intends to explore this integration development approach further in one of its programme communities.

Programme design for women and men

Another frequently asked question is:

When working apart, do the programme designs for men and women have to be different? If so, why?

Here there are two distinctive schools of thought:

- i Firstly, that women and men are fundamentally different and women need to design their own programmes, and likewise men need to do the same.
- i Secondly, that women and men have much more in common than we recognise, as human beings; as partners, as parents and as children. It is possible to design more or less the same process that works well for both genders.

We have experienced working with women's teams that have subscribed to both these points of view. Our approach is that the core programme can be the same for both genders, with natural adaptations taking place over time as and when necessary.

We have experienced this same situation when a successful programme is imported from another culture. Often in the beginning there is potential opposition to the foreign cultural influence. What we have discovered in these interactions is that more often than not, thoughtfully designed in-depth programmes for human beings are more international than we realise, and resonate with people across the globe.

In each of these cases of programmes translating across culture, there is always a natural adaptation to local language and social conditions. We feel the same way with cross-gender work. We can basically work in the same way, with natural adaptations being made as we progress.

Benefits of a similar programme design for women and men

Often programmes tend to develop a specific language and culture amongst participants, when they undergo a common experience. When integrating women and men back together after working separately, it helps the process if at least what they have experienced in their separate groups is similar. This makes the sharing and integration of learning that much more meaningful and coherent.

All the core concepts, metaphors and structures present in the design of the men's programme are equally relevant and applicable to women. For example, the four archetypes translate easily: The Creator, The Warrior, The Lover and The Queen/King. The archetypes remain the same, but women and men might have a different history, relationship and understanding with

each one of them.

Another good example is the four cornerstones that are applicable to both genders: communication, responsibility, commitment and support. It is a huge advantage if both groups are exploring the same building blocks to healthy and effective relationships. When they discuss these issues together, they will at least begin with a common understanding.

Women facilitating men and men facilitating women

We are often asked if it is appropriate for a woman to be facilitating a men's circle. We are aware that most social workers for instance are female, and that many could be interested in setting up this kind of work. In terms of general support and specific family work it is of course appropriate.

We would nevertheless encourage a woman who would like to establish support circles exploring manhood for men both young and old, to identify a male facilitator.

In most circumstances it would be seen as inappropriate for a man to be leading a programme for women.

Nevertheless, there are occasions when it could be beneficial to have a woman working alongside men facilitating a men's programme, and likewise having a man working alongside women facilitating a women's programme.

It is sometimes valuable to be able to get a male perspective or a female perspective shared with participants of the opposite gender. It is also valuable in experiencing being led by an appropriate male or female facilitator, especially in situations when participants have difficult issues related to gender through previous experience. We have seen positive outcomes when participants have been exposed to facilitators of a different gender.

Benefits of women and men facilitating together

We have had experience in certain situations of the benefits of having an integrated facilitation team.

In a prison environment for young offenders in which many of the issues the young men were facing involved their behaviour and attitude towards women,

we found it extremely beneficial having an experienced woman facilitator on our team. The young men witnessed women and men facilitating on an equal footing, and also benefitted from having a woman's perspective in the room.

Likewise young women have also benefitted having an experienced and suitable male facilitator as part of the women's team, in situations in which many of the participant's negative experiences and challenging issues have involved men.

It is important that when men and women facilitators prepare and plan their work together, that they include open conversations on the dynamics of the relationship, including possible age and work experience differences. We can remember a men's prison workshop facilitated by a team of men and women of diverse backgrounds and ages.

They worked together as a very tightly knit and highly functioning team. The lessons the participants learnt from this experience went far beyond the actual content of the "Alternatives to Violence" training. They witnessed women and men, black and white, young and old, working equally together in a mutually respectful environment.

Safety and boundary issues when working together

We have experienced some difficulties when we bring male and female facilitation teams together, especially with respect to residential programmes, particularly when there are men and women on the team, who are not used to working together. Care needs to be taken when preparing teams, to talk through clear boundary issues and protocols in terms of accommodation and socialising during the programme.

As a men's team we do this anyway in terms of the team's preparation process. This process needs to be added to when working cross-gender. We found out that we shouldn't make assumptions of what is appropriate and what is not. Everything should be clearly spelled out beforehand.

This same care needs to take place when preparing young people for a cross-gender programme. It is vital that the male and female facilitators and the staff team role-model positive ways in which men and women can work and socialise together.

Our bodies first

When engaging in this area, our method is to focus on our bodies first, our relationships, our sexuality, and finally on sex. It is far more valuable and easier to do this work in separate gender groups, especially to begin with. It is a valuable exercise for participants to experience an open, respectful and insightful discussion, in an area that many people of all ages find awkward, embarrassing or difficult.

In terms of content, this focus area is a very important aspect of our programmes with young men and women:

As we face challenges in matters of sexual health and the practice of safer sex;

Young people face huge pressure to have sex before they might feel ready, emotionally mature, or in a trusting relationship;

Within many of our communities we experience widespread sexual abuse.

Whatever resilience we can help them develop, and support we can give young people in this area, is extremely valuable. Respecting our bodies, the sacredness of sex, the beauty of intimate relationships and the nurturing of love between partners, lies at the heart of what we do.

Body talk and sexuality

When working on a combined young men's and women's programme, we witnessed how important and useful it was to split the two groups for specific work.

We also discovered how rare it was for there to be a cross-generational discussion of sex, sexuality and relationships.

We experienced first-hand how much young men and women wanted to know from older men and women, with regards to their life experience in these areas.

Some frequently asked questions are:

How do you sustain a marriage?

How is it possible to sustain a long-term sexual relationship with the same

person?

What is the relationship between love and sex? If I say 'no' does that mean I don't love him? How do you know when you are ready?

How does one deal with all the peer pressure to have sex?

Are men's and women's expectations different in terms of relationships, love and sex?

What are the stages in developing an intimate and sexual relationship?

STATEMENTS FROM THE HEART...

“Families are in crisis.”

“The family is the foundation to a healthy community and to a healthy nation.”

“My family is my pillar, it provides me with a support structure from birth until death.”

“Too many marriages are breaking down, which causes families to break down, which has an impact on our children, our communities and on us as a nation.”

“There is nowhere to go to parenting school. We are supposed to learn on the job. Being a good parent is one of the most important roles to fulfill.”

“Absent fathers, men reneging on their responsibilities, leaving mothers and grandmothers to raise their children on their own, this has to stop!”

“Turning men back towards their families, back towards their children, back towards their marriages, that is our goal.”

Chapter ten

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Debates and statements around absent fathers, parenting, marriage breakdown, failure in education, youth crime and recidivism, drug addiction, sexual violence, are constantly in the media and public domain.

Some of the questions we asked:

- What are the strains on family life that make it difficult to thrive if the breadwinner is unemployed, or in a low-income job?
- How best can we support families in the current state of gender-based violence?
- How can we strengthen the marriage bond?
- How can we support the preservation of the family unit in times of crisis?
- How can we strengthen parenting?
- How can we empower men to play a more constructive role within their family?

No man is an island

In our engagement with men it is never our intention to work in isolation. A man exists as part of a family. Indeed one of our core missions is to support the man within his family environment in whatever form that takes:

As a ~~husband~~ husband and partner

As a ~~brother~~ brother

As a ~~father~~ father

As a ~~grandfather~~ grandfather

We aim to support him in strengthening his bond with his family, improving his communication skills with individual members, building his relationships

and deepening his understanding of his role within the family.

No family is an island

We know that families don't exist in isolation, either.

When we are working with men and their families, we have to take historical, environmental, social, political and economic factors into account. These factors have a huge impact on family life and put tremendous strain on the family as a unit.

Throughout our history, from the onset of colonial rule, the migrant labour system, the ravages of apartheid, the formalisation of the prison system and industrialisation have caused widespread family disintegration.

In our work supporting men within their families, we have to, where applicable, consider the effects of poverty and unemployment, of living in survival mode, on their individual capacity and morale.

In an ideal world the family is seen as the place in which we can receive psychosocial and financial support, where we can experience a reasonable level of stability. We know from our experience that sadly in far too many instances, this is not the case.

Our progression: taking one step at a time

In the beginning our vision was great. Our ultimate aim was to strengthen family life, empower parents, and to encourage men to be more accountable. We knew we had to start somewhere.

Someone once said: "Each time you shoot an arrow, you should aim at only one target." So we adapted this notion and adopted our own motto: "Take things one step at a time".

Although it was necessary that we had a sharp focus to begin with, we discovered that we limited ourselves when we only worked with the men, to the exclusion of other family members.

Our steps to the working with families vision

Step one

At Hearts of Men we started interacting with men first, developing our methodologies, and taking them through the Manhood mentoring programme. We then progressed to working with young men, taking them through the same programme, and uniting the older and younger men into one circle.

Step two

Then we widened our mentoring focus to supporting fathers, especially young fathers, and also preparing young men for fatherhood. This became known as the Fatherhood mentoring programme, using the same model as before, but now empowering older fathers to mentor first-time fathers and fathers to be. We were thus moving closer to our family vision.

Through open sessions we held, where family members were invited to attend and were given the space to give feedback to the facilitators, it became clear that many women were struggling with understanding or adapting to the changes that were taking place in their man's life. Some of the changes were so extreme that they were placing strain on the marriage relationship.

Step three

This was a red flag, and it needed us to restructure the way we were working, to find a way to include wives and children in our process, in order to bring a balance to the changes that were affecting the family as a whole.

Examples of some of these family-strengthening initiatives have been:

Father and children's camp

– where the dad takes his children on a camp, together with other fathers and children;

Father and son camp

– where the dad takes his son on a camp to bond their relationship, together with other fathers and sons;

Father and daughter workshop

- where the father and daughter get a chance to deepen their relationship, together with other fathers and daughters;

Mother and daughter camp

- where the mother and daughter have an opportunity to deepen their relationship, together with other mothers and daughters;

Women's and mothers' camp

- in which women and mothers get to experience the same process as their husbands and partners;

Women's and young women's camp

- where the mentoring relationship between older and younger is developed;

Sibling workshop

- in which siblings can get to explore and understand family dynamics, and improve their relationship;

Couples workshop

- in which partners, husbands and wives get to explore and deepen their relationship, improve their communication, learn from and share with other couples;

Parenting workshops

- in which parents would be supported in a wide range of skills, and have an opportunity to learn from and share with other parents;

Young couples workshop

- in which young couples can explore and deepen their understanding of relationships, and prepare themselves for the road ahead.

Step four

A Hearts of Women programme, as well as a Motherhood mentoring programme was piloted. The design was similar to the Hearts of Men programmes, with natural adaptations and changes being implemented by the women facilitators and team leaders.

We also developed the Reclaiming Womanhood and Reclaiming Motherhood

manuals, to go alongside the men's manuals with the same content.

Step five

We had a social worker appointed to provide programme participants and their families with a professional link to health, social and psychological support services. Our social worker would assist Hearts of Men facilitators with family assessments and referral processes.

Step six

Our vision is now to work on integrating all the above-mentioned programmes and initiatives into a more holistic and integrated service, and to do what we can to share these ideas and structures with other individuals, organisations and communities.

Focusing on the important transitions we make within our family journey

Our experience in Hearts of Men has taught us that given the age range of our participants and the scope of our work, we cover the whole spectrum of family life: from birth to death, from being parented to being abandoned, from being single to being in partnership, from marriage to divorce, from rearing children as a couple to living alone.

Our course work and training cover many dimensions of life within the family:

Our childhood experience: how this influences and shapes us;

Forming relationships: young love and the broken heart;

Pre-marriage: finding a partner you love and preparing yourself for a long-lasting relationship;

Marriage: making a life-changing commitment and learning to live in a balanced partnership;

Pre-children: building a solid foundation in order to sustain a family;

Having children: transforming yourself and your relationship in order to make space for new life;

Parenting: being able to adapt your parenting as your child grows from toddler to adolescent, being clear on your roles as a mother and a father;

The empty nest: adapting your life as your children begin to depart the family home;

Losing your partner: overcoming the loss and adapting to living alone without your life partner;

Divorce: dealing with the transition and all of the disruption caused, starting a new life;

Single parenting: meeting the challenges of parenting one's children on your own;

Losing a parent: overcoming the loss and adapting to life without your parent;

Starting a new family: meeting the challenges of a new relationship, using your previous experience;

The reconstituted family: facing the challenge of other children in the home, of being a stepbrother or a stepsister.

Taking on your new partner's children: facing all the challenges of being a step-parent;

Accepting a new parent: accepting and building a relationship with your parent's new partner;

Becoming a grandparent: celebrating this new and exciting role, discovering this new relationship.

Reflections

The difference between men and women

I remember a youth session I facilitated once. I asked them if they could tell me the difference between fantasy and real love, when a young man got up and said, "Men have fantasies every 30 seconds, and women experience real love once in a lifetime."

The challenge of having children

“Why all of a sudden must I fight for my wife’s attention and affection?”

“Why does she so easily express her love for our child, but finds it difficult to do the same for me?”

“What do I do when my wife is always tired and exhausted, and refuses to have sex with me?”

Changing roles

“How do we view a wife who earns more than her husband, and is the main provider?”

“How do we view a man changing nappies, or walking down the street pushing a pram?”

“How do we view men that are now stay-at-home dads that do most of the cooking and cleaning?”

“How do I get my son to replace his street-fighting knife with a kitchen knife, so he can help cook his family a meal?”

Working with different kinds of families

In our experience we find we have to work with several different kinds of family units:

Nuclear family: with both biological parents present;

Single-parent family: with a mother or a father only;

Single-sex family: where male partners or female partners are parenting;

Adopted family: where children are living with their adoptive parents;

Blended/reconstituted family: (also known as step-family) where either one or both parents bring their children into the new relationship;

Foster-care family: that cares for children on a temporary basis;

Extended family: that might include grandparents, an aunt, uncle, cousins, amongst others.

Additional opportunities for engaging with family members

Family days

Social functions and activities to bring families of participants and facilitators together, for example a camp, a sports day, a braai, a mountain hike, a visit to Robben Island.

Home visits

When men become involved in the programme they undertake to be transparent in the way they relate to their families, and to be truthful in their support circles, as to what is going on at home and their behaviour within the family.

To support these men in the programme, the facilitator will conduct random home visits to both adult and youth participants. It is invaluable for the programme facilitator to get a good sense of the participant's living conditions, and to meet his wife or partner and children. He will observe the atmosphere in the home, the communication between family members, and identify any specific issues they might have that could be addressed within the programme.

The visit could also give the spouse an opportunity to give feedback about her husband or son, and for the facilitator to give her more information regarding her husband's participation.

The Hearts of Men-nominated social worker can also undertake a home visit on the recommendation of the programme facilitator or on the request of a participant himself or his partner.

Ceremonies

Examples of these ceremonies are given in other chapters of this book:

Mentor graduation ceremony; Leaving ceremony; Welcome home ceremony; Father and son ceremony; Mother and daughter ceremony

Ceremonies provide an ideal time to involve the wider family in the acknowledgement of their participating mother, father, son or daughter. It is an ideal opportunity for family members to make acknowledgements in public and to give feedback to the programme. These ceremonies also provide inspiration and encouragement to families and to communities.

More details on home visits and ceremonies are given in the Hearts of Men Training Manual.

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

Marriage
relationship

Parenting
relationship

Sibling
relationship

Whole family
relationship

Being a Father

I left home as a sixteen-year-old due to my involvement with the student resistance movement of the 1980s. I came to a painful decision to leave my home because of the numerous times our family home was searched by security police at any odd hour of the morning. The manner in which the searches took place became an enormous strain on my parents and siblings and leaving home was the only option I had.

All I had was my father's firm belief in me that I will achieve the best that life has to offer me. I returned eighteen months later and met the girl I was going to marry. We fell in love and a few months later she became pregnant. With great fear of her mom we decided that the best way to deal with the situation was to ask my parents if she could move in with us. They agreed and when our son was three months old we got married. Then our journey of being parents started.

Our first child

Our greatest challenge now as young parents were to raise our son, who was diagnosed with asthma and needed medical treatment every second day. We moved at least ten times before his fifth birthday. My experience as a husband and a father was severely challenged, having to care for and protect both my young wife and my sickly son who so much wanted to be a sportsman. His personality developed under immense pressure as our landlords repeatedly wanted us to "shut him up." Now, years later we see how that suppression has shaped him into a young adult, who doesn't make friends easily and keeps to himself most of the time.

Our second child

Our second son came along as expected five years later, now finally in our own home. We were in our twenties and much water had passed under the bridge. We were doing well in our respective jobs and were occupying leadership positions in the church. Our experience has taught us that we must not allow external pressure to shape the way we raise our children. This son was a very bubbly child, easily making friends and had a very inquiring mind. However, due to the distance we lived from our work-places and the schools they attended we decided to leave them with my parents, whom were both retired at that time, to take care of them when we were working or on the

mission field somewhere in the country.

This started to take its toll as we only saw our sons over weekends. My wife and I decided to buy a house close to our parents and after two years of searching we finally found a house we could make a home with our children around our table. His personality developed with much care and time spent with his parents and grandparents. Now as a young adult, he knows what he wants and goes for it. He is not easily influenced and stands his ground.

For more than a decade I believed that two sons were all we were going to have. We enjoyed our sons, travelling the country and raising them to understand that they have a purpose to impact their generation with love knowing who they are as men.

Then tragedy hit my wife's family when their mom passed very suddenly. After much deliberation we decided to have another child that will bring comfort and joy to our home once again. Then my wife became pregnant, oh how we celebrated that moment! We did everything necessary to prepare the way for this son. We were now in our 30's, hopefully much wiser than before. We played music to him in the womb, sang songs and had long conversations. My wife ate the right food and did the exercises. Everything was ready for the arrival of our newborn.

Our third child

Then he finally arrived under the watchful eye of his dad, after two in the morning he was born, weighing 3.5kg, our love-child. My wife was the only patient in the recovery ward and I left the hospital to share the good news with my family. At about 6 am the night-shift staff discovered that my wife had not stopped bleeding and that she had complications, she nearly bled to death.

Our son just turned ten years old as I am writing this. He has now represented Western Province in various sporting codes, a fun-loving, very energetic youngster who really loves life.

Chapter eleven

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Geographical communities

In Hearts of Men when we refer to working with a community, we are usually referring to a specific **geographical community**. Part of the strength of our work has been to focus on making an impact on a specific neighbourhood/suburb. This relates back to the notion that “when firing an arrow, you can only hit one target at a time.” This means that the bulk of our mentors come from the same community as the youth participants. This gives the programme a constant presence and makes it easy for the mentors to observe and stay in regular contact with the mentees.

Communities of interest

Educational institutions

Hearts of Men has also been very active in promoting school-based mentorship programmes. The community is then defined as the school involving staff, learners, parents, key partners and community volunteers. Even though the school is the main focus, we are still conscious of integrating the programme into the surrounding community through the recruitment of local men to be trained as mentors.

Former combatants

We facilitated a programme with groups of former combatants, who were identified as being a distinct community, through common experience, facing

similar challenges and having similar needs.

Farm workers

We have facilitated several farm-based programmes with farm workers and their families. The majority of these participants would be living together as part of the farming community.

Other examples of communities of interest can be sports and recreational clubs, faith-based bodies and community safety structures.

Community development

Our aim is always to impact the individual first, and then their family and community. Our intention is to leave a lasting impact within the host community.

This could entail:

@the establishing of cooperative relationships between groups in the community;

@the creation of self-supporting problem-solving structures in the community;

@the enhancement of common interest and participation in community affairs;

@encouraging a culture of service and the promotion of local leadership.

The Hearts of Men approach

We follow a community-centred approach, whereby the residents or members of a specific community, form the very basis of the development of that community.

Much of our implementation model in relation to our work with communities has already been shared. To avoid unnecessary repetition, we refer you to the following chapters:

“Facilitating the work” (p183) covers strategies for entering and exiting the community, as well as for promoting ownership of the programme. It also

refers to the training of and the transfer of skills to community participants.

“Working with strategic partners” (p171) covers choosing a venue/base within a community, engaging with gatekeepers, and identifying community champions to promote the programme.

“Men taking action” (p93) covers the implementation of projects specifically aimed at improving an aspect of community life.

“Circles of men” (p51) covers the setting-up of support circles within the community.

“Working with families” (p147) covers our ideas for engaging with and including families, and for strengthening all aspects of family life within the community. It also covers social work support.

“Mentoring at work” (p103) covers the establishment of mentoring structures within the community.

Working in partnership

Working together with government agencies and other organisations is vital, in order for us to prevent any duplication of services, promote partnership, avoid unnecessary competition and being seen as a threat, and most importantly, to maximise the benefit of all the available resources.

Some of these resources might relate to:

Health
Safety
Social Work
Education
Residential care
Rehabilitation
Outreach activities
Entrepreneurship

Some of the obstacles we have faced when working with communities

Here we mention just a few of the possible obstacles we have already faced.

There will of course be many more in the future. We recommend taking possible obstacles into account, before one might step into a new situation, whatever the community.

Gangsterism, crime and violence

Being aware of possible threats when we enter a community is important. Gang membership and gang activity can pose a serious challenge when working with men and boys in a specific community, as gang leaders might view the programme as opposition to their recruitment of men and youth.

For safety purposes, and to protect our programme, we have always kept a low profile in terms of what we say publicly. We never issue statements or make declarations that we are in opposition to or that we aim to deter youth from their local gang structures. We just keep doing the work we do, and hope to positively contribute to the lives of those that participate in our programmes.

In this way we receive either “silent” approval or at the very least, little to no disruption, when people experience some of the benefits of our work.

We have learnt that sometimes a gangster parent actually wishes for something different for their children: a way out.

It's safer inside

In my community there is a spike in gang violence whenever inmates are released back into the community. They either come back with instructions to carry out from inside the prison (specific actions to be taken), or there is someone waiting for them, to take revenge. Two young men who had been in our programme a while back, had recently been released (given the odds stacked against them, we don't have success with every participant!). They came to visit me, and when I asked them how they were doing, one replied “Uncle, I think I want to go back.” When I expressed my surprise, he explained, “Uncle, we feel scared out here, we need protection. It will be safer for us back inside.”

Outsiders versus insiders

When we come into a community, we are often perceived as outsiders by the insiders, those who live or operate inside that specific community. There can be resentment and resistance to the so-called expert who comes in without any knowledge of local skills and experience, and provides solutions and guidance.

The outsider, on the other hand, could be perceived as being a threat to vested interests within the community. Often the outsider is already funded to work in that specific community, and is seen either as a mercenary (doing it for the money) for their own benefit. This can also breed resentment and resistance by a community without resources and financial muscle.

Acknowledging these potential obstacles is important, in terms of working in such a way as to be able to have open conversations with community leaders and participants, in order to address all of these issues. Bringing them out into the open shows an awareness of these dynamics and a willingness to seriously engage with them.

Another negative perception of the outsider is the experience many communities have had with several interventions whereby NPOs come in, begin their work, and then exit after a brief spell with little to no transfer of skills having taken place. This situation is often funder-driven. At Hearts of Men we take great care in dealing with this kind of situation, by making sure we make agreements we can keep, and have a funder committed for the required period.

It is important to remember that we are not going to be in the community forever, and that our intentions are to empower local men and women to take ownership of the programme.

Working with gatekeepers

In a particular community the gatekeepers refused to associate themselves with us as they were threatened by us as outsiders wanting to effect change within their community for which they would not be able to claim the credit. Our approach to this problem was that in the initial stages of the process, to each time upon entry to the community, to first visit them and inform them

about the plans for that particular visit, and ask them for their blessing and advice as to who we should engage with to achieve our objective.

After doing this for a while the gatekeeper became our biggest supporter, and each time we entered the community they would gather a group of people we needed to speak to. Later even though they were not involved in the programme, they could bask in the glow of having assisted in the introduction of this new initiative.

We learnt quickly enough that we could achieve an enormous amount, if we don't spend time worrying ourselves with who gets or takes the credit!

Hopelessness and fear

Often we find a pervading sense of hopelessness within a community, given the high levels of social breakdown. People might have given up on seeing any improvements in their circumstances, or on considering the possibility that their lives might change for the better. This sense of hopelessness can also prevent people from wanting to work together or to try something new.

Sometimes we witness high levels of tension and fear within a community, in circumstances in which citizens do not feel safe to walk their own streets, especially after dark. There is a feeling that the youth are lost, and a sense of paralysis in not knowing what to do about this issue.

With this as a background, our programme has as its main aim to regain hope, to motivate, energise and mobilise local men and women to take action. In order to do this, we look at acknowledging people's experiences and feelings, exploring constructive ways forward, and on building support structures. The implementation of modest community improvement projects is integral to slowly building up confidence and momentum. The provision of ongoing monitoring and mentoring is critical.

Political and religious terrain

Another key aspect upon entering a new community is to negotiate the political and religious terrain. As mentioned before, it is critical that the programme doesn't fall into the ownership or influence of one religious group or political faction. Religious and political leaders should

be respected, informed and consulted.

If it is a community-building initiative, then it must be seen to be accessible and relevant to all. If we have, however, been invited to facilitate a programme, let's say for example for a church community, then we approach the matter differently, as the intended programme is clearly meant to serve the members of that congregation.

Being aware of the social, political and religious dynamics within a community can only be beneficial to effective programme delivery.

Serving versus payment for services

There are always tensions between being paid and doing this work for no payment, especially when you mix paid staff with volunteers (who are often living in difficult financial situations) together on the same project.

Working primarily with volunteers makes it possible to do this work with modest budgets and assists us to make it sustainable. The trouble with paid staff is that the minute the funds run out, the work will stop. Likewise with the volunteer, the minute they get offered paid work somewhere else, they could drop the project and leave.

Promoting a passion and commitment for this work is paramount. Sometimes we see volunteers continuing their service even when a job comes up, because they made a commitment to the programme. Likewise we see a paid staff member continuing the work in their spare time, after the funds have dried up.

Promoting stewardship, providing a service without expecting anything in return or to be rewarded for the function fulfilled, is needed. The only benefit for the steward in giving service is to witness the recipient's satisfaction, success and sense of joy.

We always need to be vigilant of the hero syndrome whereby the provider of the service parades their giftedness promoting awe and admiration wherever he goes. Our task is to develop others, and to see members of the community rising up and receiving all the admiration and acknowledgement due to them.

Training and Development

Our programme should represent an investment in the local community. Training and development are key objectives to any programme, and our intentions of doing this work are to plug the gaps that may be in a community, that will allow them to function optimally. Our focus is on the individuals that might have the potential to effect social change, but who are possibly unaware of the power they possess. In this way we do our best to unearth a new leadership within the host community.

The programme is geared to make them aware of the task at hand, and to give them the tools they would need to navigate their way through obstacles and steer themselves, their family and their community to a different set of outcomes, for everyone's benefit, for all to enjoy.

SOME USEFUL HINTS FOR ONGOING SUCCESS

Hold regular report-back meetings with local leaders to inform them about the status of the programme;

Conduct regular stakeholder meetings to keep everyone informed of the developments in the programme;

Avoid repetition: do not re-invent the wheel;

Work in partnership with other organisations especially with regards

to referrals;

Work closely with identified local men in order to stimulate their interest in the programme;

Involve the identified men in session planning, design and implementation;

Allow the community to participate in identifying their needs and promoting solutions;

Find out who the gatekeepers and power brokers are before entering each community;

Always do individual visits to community leaders before doing a public presentation: remember, personal approaches are best;

Invite all those from the list above to a public presentation;

If the need arises, hold more than one public presentation to ensure buy-in from the leaders and the community;

Build a common vision for the programme in the community;

Allow enough time for the first phase of the programme; you never know how long it is going to take from introduction, through negotiation and preparation, to implementation; And remember, the programme is about them; it is not about you!

Chapter twelve

WORKING WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

In this chapter we look at working with strategic partners and how this strengthens what we do. We examine what we mean by strategic partnership, our selection criteria, and experiences we've had of working together with a variety of strategic partners in the community, in education, with nonprofit organisations and with provincial and local government departments.

Identifying the need for partnership

As we have said before, no man is an island. We can now add to that: no organisation is an island, and no intervention can exist and thrive in isolation. We learned early on in our development that building strong and meaningful partnerships were essential to successful programme delivery. Finding partners who complemented our strengths, and made up for any weaknesses we might have, was critical. In order to better the quality of our delivery of service to beneficiaries, we realised we could not do it all, and we could certainly not do it alone. We have now become accustomed to working in partnership with others.

What is a strategic partnership?

A strategic partnership refers to a dynamic relationship between ourselves and another individual, organisation, institution or government department, that is focused on delivering a specific service or achieving a certain outcome within an agreed time frame. The relationship can be short-term or long-term in nature, and usually involves a memorandum of understanding between us as partners.

Identifying and working with a strategic partner is different from engaging with stakeholders. A stakeholder has an interest in the project or service that is to be delivered, but does not necessarily have the motivation to put in the hard work, or a designated role in the delivery process. Of course communicating with stakeholders is important, and can well develop into a strategic partnership, but it is important to recognise the difference. Over the years we have attended too many stakeholder meetings that have delivered little or nothing.

Strategic partners have specific skills, resources or services to contribute, in what is intended to be a mutually beneficial and action-orientated relationship.

Selection of a strategic partner

Some important questions we ask when selecting a strategic partner are:

- Is this specific project something we can do ourselves?
- What do we need in order to be more effective?
- In which areas of delivery are we overstretched or underresourced?
- Who could provide some of the services that the work requires that are outside our area of expertise?
- Can we identify a suitable partner?
- How can we work cooperatively with the identified partner?
- Have we clarified our different areas of contribution and recorded all agreements?
- What are the possible stumbling blocks to a successful working relationship?

Over the years we have established several strategic partnerships, each focusing on different areas:

Programme delivery
Bills and training
Physical resources

Some examples of these partnerships have been:

With a funder

We deliver the work and the funder provides the financial resources over an agreed period of time. We are both focused on an agreed outcome or area of impact, that is, the funder and ourselves as recipients, are both aligned as to what we are attempting to achieve.

With a government department

We deliver a service that is consistent with a specific governmental policy direction, which has identified deliverables. We work in agreed geographical areas. In this way we are aligned as service deliverers to the aims of the funding department.

With a school

We are given free access to utilise the school's facilities and resources in the delivery of a community-based programme. Suitable physical spaces are identified for purposes of training sessions, meetings and equipment storage. We provide facilitation support and mentorship in delivering a programme to identified learners. In this case the school leadership became a strategic partner in terms of driving the recruitment process in the surrounding community.

With another NGO

We receive specific skills training for our staff team, as well as possible ongoing mentorship, in order to develop and strengthen our programme delivery and evaluation methodology. We have collaborated in several three-way community interventions, where three NPOs with complementary skills, coming together to facilitate a schools, a community youth and an adult leadership programme.

With an education/research institution

This is beneficial for purposes of accreditation of training, practical research and programme evaluation. We benefit from the interaction between

students, academics, practitioners and communities, as well as receiving research findings. A student benefits in a practical way through engaging with a community programme as part of their coursework and research projects.

With a media or design department

We benefit from the contribution of students to the improvement of our communications, public image, logos, website, publications, and so forth. Students engage with us as part of their practical design/copywriting coursework. They produce written material and graphics for us to use for marketing and other purposes.

Possible obstacles to working in partnership

There are obviously many possible obstacles to creating effective partnerships. Here we focus on just four of them: **competitiveness, lack of trust, gatekeepers, and political or religious alignment.**

Competitiveness

A recurring block to co-operation is when service deliverers are seen to be competing for the same funds, or for the same geographical terrain. NPOs, CBOs or academic institutions might be vying for seniority status, wanting to be seen as the senior or dominant or controlling partner. Sometimes we are not willing to share the credit for successes achieved, or the consequences when we fail. All these obstacles have to be taken into account when selecting a partner, often needing careful and skillful negotiation.

Our best partnerships have been when the NPOs involved each received funding from different sources, meaning three NPOs working in partnership within one community, equalled three different funders contributing.

NPOs – nonprofit organisations

CBOs – community-based organisations

This model removed all competition for resources, and also diversified the

funding source, by bringing in several donors to assist. Each NPO involved took the lead on one programme, and then combined resources for a third intervention. In this way there was no contestation amongst the parties within the identified geographical area, as well as a balance in the delivery process.

In order for us to have access to the community and not to experience opposition to the three agreed interventions, local CBOs had to be respectfully engaged and convinced that their work was not being threatened in any way, and that we could all work together for the good of the local community.

Turning competitiveness into cooperation is always vital for good results to be achieved, especially when needing to work in partnership with others.

Lack of trust

Building up trust between partners is essential to solid working relationships. We have experienced situations in which we have to hit the ground running, where we start working in a new partnership on a new programme with immediate effect. This is often due to timeline pressures from a funder or a controlling partner, for example a government department that might be under political pressure to deliver as soon as possible.

In these situations there is no time to build trust in each other's capacity, skill levels, working methods and values. You are getting to know each other under extreme pressure, which is not ideal.

When building new relationships it is far easier and perhaps advisable to enter into partnership agreements with people you already know and trust. You might have worked with them before, or they come highly recommended by colleagues you can rely on. In this way it is easier to move ahead more speedily. Having a similar mindset and passion for what you are doing, is key in forging effective working partnerships. Being patient, flexible and giving time to the relationship is important.

Gatekeepers

We have discovered that the (sometimes self-appointed) gatekeepers within a community or organisation are not always the best strategic partners.

Indeed, they can block your access to locating the most effective partners, but they do need to be engaged with, they cannot be ignored.

When we started our first programme in 2001, we entered into a new community guided by a community development officer working in local government. He skillfully took us to meet all the gatekeepers in that community. He saw to it that they each gave their blessing to our work and understood how we wished to contribute. He explained to us that these gentlemen were primarily interested in the positions they held, and could not be expected to contribute to our work in their community. But they did hold the power to disrupt us, if they saw fit. This guidance and advice given by the community development officer was invaluable to our successful entry into that community.

We discovered the difference between gatekeepers and champions. Our first champion was the head of the primary school in that community, and was highly respected for the contribution she had made to the school as well as the surrounding neighbourhood. She saw the importance of giving local adults access to her facilities. She proved to be a wonderful strategic partner to us as she used her position of influence to benefit and serve the wider community. She was a gate-opener, a champion and allowed our work to flourish.

Political or religious alignment

We recognise the importance of political and religious activity within the life of a community. In terms of forming strategic partnerships when delivering a programme, it is critical we are not seen to be taking sides, belonging to or aligning ourselves with one grouping or faction.

Our work should be accessible to all and to be contributing to the wider community, so it is important that we choose our partners in delivery carefully. For example, basing our programme training venue in a local church hall, can very easily create the perception that we are running a Christian-based programme, or that Muslim members of the community are not welcome.

We encourage men when they enter our programme circles to remove their party political hats, or their specific denomination hat, so that we can just meet as men, regardless of our religious or political persuasion. It is important

we do this as an organisation as well, then we are not seen as a strategic partner to any one religious or political body.

If invited by one church to facilitate a men's or a young man's programme for their own membership, we would seriously consider doing so. In this case it would be clearly a church-based piece of work for one specific client, which is different from promoting a community-wide programme.

What has worked for us when facilitating with other organisations and partners

- @partners respecting each others' abilities, and creating the space for each other to contribute their skills and experience;
- @partners working in their own field of expertise complementing one another;
- @creating more diversity within the facilitating team and amongst participants;
- @the integration of participants from diverse backgrounds;
- @one continuity facilitator always in attendance, meaning at least one consistent staff member, when working in a multi-disciplinary team;
- @agreement on all the specifications for the programme, for example the number of participants, timeline, design, resources available, individual accountabilities, and so on;
- @regular debriefing and planning sessions;
- @clarity in terms of communication channels and previously agreed dispute resolution mechanisms.

Working with Government

Over the past fourteen years we have worked with various government departments both provincial and local: the Western Cape Education Department, Dept of Community Safety, Departments of Social Development and Dept of Agriculture.

Working with government departments as a strategic partner, presents us with several challenges. When a Government department outsources work to

a specific NPO, that selected organisation becomes an extension of the state's delivery obligation, and thus becomes the face of the state.

Mostly, when organisations are approached by the state to do a specific programme, it is often the priority area of the particular department, but not necessarily the chosen focus area for the organisation. Due to the lack of public funds available to NPOs, many organisations are pulled into the funding and shift their focus, sometimes away from their area of strength, in order to deliver on a specific department's agenda.

Some challenges we have experienced when working with Government

- Government staff being shifted between posts or departments and thereby losing continuity;
- The official we work with is responsible for too many projects, seldom having the time for attending to the partnership;
- This results in lengthy turnaround time for dealing with queries and resolving difficulties;
- The official being over-stretched, does not reply to correspondence relating to the project;
- Often we have been given once-off funding mostly at the end of a particular funding cycle or financial year (to quickly spend un-allocated money); this does not allow for sustainability;
- Late payments have serious ramifications especially when it comes to payment of staff and programme costs relating to the project;
- Notice of a new funding cycle given at the very last minute which impacts hugely with regards to effective planning recruiting new staff, renewing staff contracts and/or losing staff;
- Pressure to deliver services far from our base, which produces challenges and extra expenses around transport, the management of staff, and the successful monitoring of programmes;
- Excessive time spent on bureaucracy; administration, reporting, monitoring, auditing, and so forth, rather than on delivery of services;

- Having to appoint new staff under pressure and at short notice;
- Staff salaries and posts being defined by the department, which often don't align with our internal policies and systems in place;
- Fast-tracking processes without having the management systems or personnel in place.

As you can see from the above list, although there were many benefits and successes, we did not have any easy time working with Government. Either the support has been on a once-off basis and thus unsustainable, or it has been longer-term but very much as a junior partner in the process. We wouldn't always describe this relationship as necessarily successful or a good example of a strategic partnership at work.

PART FOUR

THE DEVELOPMENT –
keeping the heart beating

Our sustainability – how we keep
doing our work

Chapter thirteen

FACILITATING THE WORK

In this chapter we will focus on the demands of this work, the role of the facilitator, the recommended training process for facilitators within Hearts of Men, the necessary qualities we look for in a potential facilitator, and on sustaining the work.

It takes a special kind of person to facilitate men's work in communities where the following notions prevail: "men are no good", "men are violent", "you can't trust a man" and "men don't take responsibility".

Some of the challenges inherent in this work:

- Dealing with the effects of decades of violence, abuse and poverty, on male behaviour, family life and relationships;
- Facing addictions and addictive behaviour;
- Transforming violent and aggressive ways of dealing with conflict;
- Turning men back towards their families;
- Encouraging men to take responsibility for their children;
- Moving men from being community destroyers to becoming community builders.

Are these challenges easy to work with? No, not at all!

Demands of facilitating this work

This work is demanding on your **time and energy**. There are no quick fixes or shortcuts to see lasting tangible changes in relationships or behaviour. Restoring fragmented relationships and sustaining positive impacts take patience, commitment, faith and high levels of motivation from all concerned.

During the process a man will often take one step forward, and then two steps back.

This work can also be **emotionally challenging**, not only on the participant, but also on the facilitator. When men share their stories that do often relate to experiences of trauma, this might trigger emotions within the facilitator from their own life experience.

This work demands **creativity and flexibility**. Sometimes we have to make things up as we go along in order to deal with unexpected circumstances and dynamics. Although our work is highly structured with clear processes, we know we have to be able to adapt to ever-changing circumstances within group and community settings.

A Hearts of Men facilitator's core objectives are:

- @ To make things happen within a team environment – versus doing it all;
- @ To guide participants through the process;
- @ To create a safe and non-judgemental space in which learning and growth can occur;
- @ To role-model positive ways of communicating, dealing with conflicts, respect consistency and fairness;
- @ To inspire, to give leadership, provide guidance and support.

Our facilitators have various roles to fulfill

Presenting

This involves preparation, facilitating information sessions, delivering programme content material and relevant information, enrolling participants into the programme, and engaging with people in an inspiring manner.

Team leading

This involves facilitating the healthy functioning of the programme staff and volunteer team, conducting planning and debrief sessions, setting up effective channels of communication.

Process guiding

This involves facilitating participants through different processes and stages of the programme, and monitoring their levels of participation.

Programme management

This involves managing all the logistical preparation and completion of necessary documentation, safety procedures, agreements, amongst others.

As you can see from this above list, we require our facilitators to be **multi-skilled**.

Development stages for Hearts of Men facilitators

The recommended development path for a Hearts of Men facilitator goes from being a participant to undergoing an internship, to facilitating, to becoming a lead facilitator/team leader, and to taking on programme co-ordination.

Participant

Here a man must experience the programme content through attending the whole course. This could be on a weekly basis (with some weekends) for between six to nine months. He must complete the mentoring training and practice as a mentor for a further period.

Intern

In some programmes we have encouraged certain participants based on their successful completion of the initial programme, to step up into a facilitator training by becoming an intern. On occasions we have also opened this process up for participants to apply for a specific number of internships. The

internship runs for another programme cycle, in which the intern will have an opportunity to study and learn most of the processes involved, working as part of the facilitation and leadership team. He will receive mentoring from the lead facilitator/s.

Our learning process goes through four phases:

Experiencing the programme first-hand as a participant (as mentioned above);

Reproducing the programme, being able to replicate the work and understand how it all fits together (the internship phase);

Starting to make the work your own, bringing your own personality and style to how you facilitate the process (the facilitator stage);

Developing the work, once the individual has mastered all the above, they are encouraged to bring their own creativity forth in order to further develop and strengthen the work.

Facilitator

On successful completion of the internship process, and if deemed suitable the participant will be appointed as a programme facilitator. This could well be at the start of the third programme cycle. He will continue to be mentored by the lead facilitator.

We do find men progress at a different pace according to their previous experience of facilitating, and their aptitude for the task. Some may be successfully fast-tracked through our development stages, and others might need more time to develop. The key criteria is for a man to go through the development phases as described, but there can and should be flexibility regarding the time it takes.

Lead facilitator and team leader

Once the facilitator has gained the necessary experience and proficiency, they could graduate to becoming a lead facilitator and team leader. One of their key tasks will now be to bring through the next generation of facilitators.

Programme coordinator

It is best for the individual overseeing and managing all aspects of programme delivery, the staffing, logistics, contracts, financial control, community liaison, maintaining partnerships, and so forth to have had direct experience of participating in and facilitating programmes themselves.

What is described above is in our opinion the healthiest and most successful way of bringing people through, who understand the work, and are able to deliver a high-quality service. Sometimes due to funder- and partner-driven pressure to deliver quickly, we have compromised on this development process with unfortunate results, such as poor standard of delivery, unnecessary conflict and disjointed teams.

The value of experience

Some important questions we asked ourselves:

- How does experience get passed down from one person to the next?
- How long does it take to build experience?
- How do we balance learning gained from studying and reading, with experiential learning?
- How do we balance the need for keeping experience on our teams, with the need to keep growing by introducing new members?
- Can you guide a person through a journey you have not experienced yourself?
- Can you guide a person through an experience that you yourself do not understand?

Inherent in our development philosophy is the value of experience. Having enough experience at hand in every facilitation team is vital. For example, let us say we have a team of nine facilitating a wilderness camp. A healthy balance would be to have two to three experienced facilitators who can give guidance to two to three facilitators of intermediate experience, and then two to three new men on the team, who are just starting out in their facilitation experience.

These new team members are then mentored by more experienced men on

the team. In this way we guarantee the smooth transition of skills and expertise, while keeping the current standard as high as possible. Sometimes we appoint an experienced facilitator to fulfill the role as an elder on the team. This man does not lead the process, but gives support, oversight and mentorship to the rest of the team, and especially to the team leader.

Qualities we consider important when facilitating this work

We look to balance competency with strength of character. While competency is critical, it can never be a substitute for lack of character and consistency in behaviour. Here we indicate some of the qualities we deem important in our facilitators. **We also acknowledge that none of us are perfect!**

Competency

- identifying with vision, objectives and values
- understanding of programme content
- developing the necessary facilitating skills

Character

- being honest at all times, transparency
- having integrity, keeping your word
- being trustworthy, taking care of all things

Generosity

- thinking of the needs of others
- being prepared to go the extra mile
- bringing out the best in others

Motivation

- always giving one's best
- being able to work independently
- being well prepared, paying attention to detail

Initiative

- predicting what lies ahead
- identifying challenges, potential obstacles
- generating possible solutions, creativity

Teamwork

- being a team player
- working with others, cooperatively
- giving and receiving support

Stability

- being able to handle one's emotions
- being consistent with timekeeping
- being reliable in the performance of one's tasks

Leadership

- being comfortable with not always being liked
- being prepared to take difficult decisions
- being an example to others

Openness

- acknowledging when things are not working
- asking for support when needed
- being able to take feedback and criticism

Development

- committing to high standards of work
- committing to ongoing learning and improvement
- strengthening communication and operations

Stamina and resilience

- being able to work in challenging circumstances
- being able to focus for long periods of time
- taking care of one's health, resting as required

Clear boundaries

- respecting confidentiality
- maintaining professional relationships
- not encouraging dependency

Humility

- working with people at their level
- being willing to serve at all times
- acknowledging the contribution others make

Maintaining the work: sustainability

One of the core responsibilities of the facilitator is to build in sustainability

from the beginning of the process.

A key question we always grappled with was:

How does the work continue after we have left a particular community?

The first lesson we learned was that we cannot and shouldn't do all the work on our own. When we did, we limited the possibility of the work continuing after our departure. We needed local men to step up to the plate as soon as it was possible.

Sustaining the work causes us to focus on how we share the responsibility with participants and host community, and also how we sustain the facilitating team in being able to continue to do this work. Here we discuss both of these aspects.

Building sustainability within a host community

In terms of sustainability from a participant and community point of view, we look at our entry and exit strategies, as well as the question of ownership.

Entry strategy

The buy-in is critical. Community members taking part in the debate whether to establish a Hearts of Men programme is an important first step.

Participants must choose the programme for themselves. It is fundamental that the programme isn't chosen by leaders who have no interest in participating themselves. Leaders can give us access, but the question of starting and sustaining an initiative needs to lie with those who will be actively involved in it. In other chapters ("Working with communities" and "Working in strategic partnerships") we discuss issues of community gatekeepers, and other relevant issues.

Ownership

Ownership occurs when participants see the programme as belonging to them, seeing it as their responsibility. It is not something run by an outside organisation, or led by charismatic leaders. It is their programme, they are accountable for its success or failure. The key function for Hearts of Men facilitators is to assist in making something happen, and to see that it is sustainable. Participants can very early on in the process take charge of

several areas, for example: recruitment, presentations, monitoring attendance and decision-making processes.

Exit Strategy

Our exit strategy has to be clearly communicated from the very start so that our local partners and host community know exactly how long we have to develop and then hand over the programme to them. This also allows the community to understand the need for them to take ownership of the programme and to be on board in order to receive the skills necessary to design and implement their own development programmes in future.

The way this takes place is through ongoing training and mentoring of local men, creating opportunities for them to shadow staff in the design and facilitation of both community-based training and outdoor weekend trainings/camps.

By doing this we are gradually starting the handover of the programme, transferring the skills, the content and materials to the local community to enable them to facilitate their own initiatives. Everything we do as the facilitating team is in preparation for our eventual exit.

For example, an introductory talk to local communities could be: “We are only the vehicle that brings this opportunity to your community. You are responsible for your own development and over the next three years we will be walking alongside you to show you ways of designing and implementing programmes that will empower young people to take ownership of their future”.

In other words, the three stages in our sustainability model really do merge. For example, part of the entry strategy is to already start the conversation concerning our exit from the community. In this way promoting ownership starts at the entry point.

Building sustainability within the facilitating team

Here we look at how we sustain the facilitating team in order for it to continue doing its work. It would serve no purpose for the team to suffer burnout and lose its effectiveness. We will focus on briefing, debriefing, ongoing training and recuperating.

Briefing

It is important to make time for briefing each individual within the team, making sure that each person fully understands what their role is in a specific activity, be it in the community-based training, an outdoor camp, or a coordinating function. Each person's roles and responsibility need to be properly recorded and communicated. All protocols, logistics and timelines need to be clarified and shared amongst the team. A well-briefed team can perform at a high level. Working in a highly functioning environment allows team members to relax, focus on their work, and it reduces tensions, worries and manages conflict effectively.

Debriefing

Once the course or activity has been completed, it is important for a debrief session to be held. We recommend debriefing the entire course regardless of the experience whether it was successful or not. We look at content, participation, logistics, facilitation and teamwork.

We give facilitators the opportunity to speak about the highlights of the training, but specifically focus on the challenges they experienced with either the coursework or with any participant.

We have found that by giving facilitators this space to debrief allows them to be more focused the next time they facilitate any process. The debrief space is also a place to speak about personal challenges and a time for more experienced staff to share the way they work with less experienced staff. Briefing and debriefing sessions provide an opportunity for individual learning and for team development.

Ongoing training

Introducing facilitators to new ideas, techniques and methodologies is a wonderful way of developing the team and strengthening the work.

It certainly helps with sustaining individual's motivation, commitment and energy. Sometimes it is good for individuals on the staff team to identify areas in which they could develop their work, and personally choose training that suits their need.

Recuperating

Recuperation is an integral part of the facilitator's wellbeing, as this will

prevent performance dip and fatigue. We strongly recommend that staff take a rest of at least two uninterrupted days after facilitating an intensive course. They need time to recover from the high demands, both physically and emotionally of the work, and to reconnect with themselves and with their families. We always have to be mindful of the fact that part of our work concerns rebuilding relationships and family. We need to see that our staff facilitators are paying attention to their own relationships and families as well!

Self-reflection and healing

There are two old sayings:

“You teach what you want to learn.”

“Healer, heal yourself first.”

It is a cardinal mistake to take on the challenge of facilitating the coursework without first having dealt with one's own issues.

The coursework is very reflective, meaning it tends to reflect back at you, issues from your own past experience, or possibly a current issue one might be struggling with. It doesn't matter how experienced you are, each time you facilitate the work touches on your own personal challenges. We advise our facilitators to deal with their personal issues in order to avoid a performance dip or emotional fatigue that is usually caused as a result of unresolved issues in their lives.

The key role of the facilitator is to be present for the participants and the issues they are grappling with, focusing on them and not on himself.

We encourage facilitators to use their own life experience when facilitating and sometimes where appropriate to share a personal story. The experiences they use must to a large extent have been resolved, otherwise the danger is that the facilitator becomes a participant in the very process they are supposed to be leading!

A key issue many men battle with is that of their relationship with their fathers. There is one session where, when we focus on this, it often causes a facilitator to become emotionally charged due to his possible lack of a relationship with his own father. It is powerful when a facilitator shares how he has also struggled with a particular issue. This must be done from a place

of reflection and understanding, so that he is able to model how an individual might resolve and be able to move on.

Appointing and managing staff

Over the years we have faced many challenges with regard to appointing and managing staff. We have experience of working with part-time and full-time staff as well as with volunteers. They each have their own demands, which are even more challenging when you have a diverse mix within an organisation, part-timers, full-timers and volunteers all working together!

SOME OF THE CHALLENGES WE HAVE FACED IN FACILITATING THE WORK

Easing the tension between paid staff and volunteers;

Managing the transition from volunteer to paid staff member, or the other way around;

Managing the transition from part-time work in one's own community, to full-time work in another community;

Promoting staff from within and managing the transition and dynamics between staff; from being a colleague, becoming a team leader, through to becoming a manager;

Internal appointments of staff not having the necessary skill level and capacity for management positions;

External appointments where the new staff members have not come through the internal training and development processes;

Moving from being a volunteer-driven organisation to a staff- and contract-driven organisation;

Moving from a passion for working with men, community and family work, to a focus on salaries, job security and resolving disputes;

Moving from being a youth programme participant and making the transition to the adult staff team.

Finding a balance

Keeping a healthy balance between the need for job security, improved

remuneration and professionalism, and the need to focus on the actual reason we started doing this work in the first place, was an ongoing challenge for us.

We possibly did our best work when we were operating part-time, each man serving his own community, on modest budgets.

Opening a head office, running a fleet of vehicles, tripling our operating budgets, increasing our staff component, has not necessarily led to a better service being delivered.

Finding the best way in which to facilitate this work, and indeed to structure our organisation, presented us with an ongoing challenge.

Keeping everyone motivated and energised, maintaining the focus of the work on delivery and on our volunteers, instead of staffing issues, salaries and contracts, provided us with yet another tough challenge.

“Leadership is not a throne,

It is a place of service.”

Chapter fourteen

WORKING WITH LEADERS

The role of leadership: creating the right balance

We identify four components, which together contribute to the successful delivery

of a programme: **content, structure, participation and leadership.**

Sometimes we have great programme content, refined and designed over many years of trial and error, but we don't get sufficient participation buy-in and therefore we don't get the desired outcome.

Sometimes the content and the participation is good, but the process is short-changed through weak or conflicting leadership.

Sometimes most of the above key components are in place – content, participation, leadership, but the organisational or co-ordination structure is flawed.

In each of the above scenarios, leadership is the glue that holds all together. Good leadership will recognise weaknesses in other key areas and take steps to strengthen them.

Without strong and clear leadership, the success of the other components are more often than not compromised.

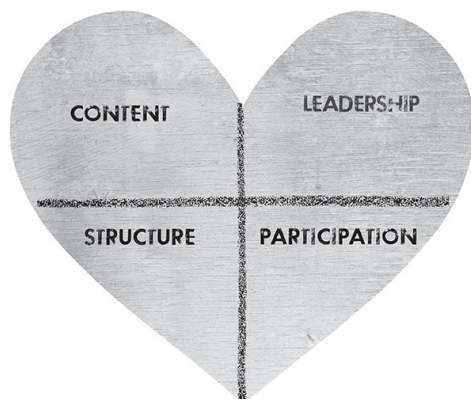
Dynamics around leadership entail identification of leaders, making appointments, competition for places, competence and confidence in getting the job done, gaining the respect of others, participants accepting the role of leadership and being prepared to follow the lead.

Effective leadership in programme delivery

The first of the three components mentioned above, content, structure and participation, have been well covered in previous chapters, for example “Our

men's training"(p83), *"Circles of men"*(p51), *"Working with men"*(p35), *"Working with families"*(p147), *"Working with communities"*(159), and *"Mentoring at work"*(p103).

We now wish to highlight the fourth key component, **leadership**.



Challenges we face in leadership

Overcoming fear

Sometimes we find people scared or hesitant in taking up leadership. This could relate to the fear of making mistakes, of not getting things right, the possibility of failure, of not being good enough, carrying the weight of responsibility, not being accepted, being blamed, and becoming isolated as a leader.

Dealing with the effects of past experience

Sometimes individuals have had negative experiences of taking the lead in the past, their leadership not being accepted, or not receiving suitable levels of support, or having themselves served under a domineering or abusive boss. Hence the very concept of fulfilling a leadership role has negative connotations.

Power

Sometimes we think of or have experienced strong leadership as

domineering, non-consultative, abusive or bullying. It is critical to redefine what we mean by strong leadership. “Strong” could mean brave, decisive, clear, inclusive and dynamic. Strong leadership is the opposite of forcing, threatening and demanding. It is important that we transform the notion of power being negative and disempowering.

Position

Sometimes leadership is confused with holding down a position. We have worked with people who are driven to hold positions as a sense of power, without being interested in the fundamental and important task of providing leadership, guiding and developing others. We encourage the concept of rotational leadership, whereby several individuals gain the necessary experience.

Leadership providing movement

In the word “leadership” we have two components, ‘leader’ and ‘ship.’ We see leadership as a vessel, a container, as a vehicle that provides movement.

Leadership is primarily about creating a container, a clear, focused and safe space, for promoting others to express themselves and to strive for excellence; to produce and be the best they can be.

Leadership manifests itself and is critical in various domains: at work, in the community, and at home, in our friendships, partnerships and relationships, in companionship and discipleship. Each one of these concepts contains the word ‘ship’, providing a container within which parenting, mentoring, loving and support can occur.

Distinguishing various levels of leadership

@Leading ourselves

@Leading others

@Leading in our family

@Leading in our community

@Leading in the world

In our course 'Taking a lead in life' described in the chapter "Our men's training" (p 83) the first question asked is:

"If you want to become a leader, who is the first person you need to lead?"

Our answer to this question is 'yourself'. This answer defines our approach to this specific training in personal leadership, in first leading yourself, taking charge of your own destiny, becoming responsible for one's own life, before looking to lead others.

Promoting leadership development

We believe that to lead you have to experience taking the lead. You have to be given the space in which to lead. You have to hold responsibility to take responsibility. Out of this philosophy comes the motto **"Young people are the leaders of today"**, rather than the widely accepted motto "Young people are the leaders of tomorrow".

We say the primary function of a leader is to develop other leaders. We have an approach that says **"each man is a leader in his own position"**. Leadership is not approached as a hierarchical function, but rather as a specific developmental role.

We believe we all have a role in developing strong leaders with integrity. Our leaders don't only train and support us to become leaders in our own right. We also have a responsibility as well to assist our leaders, in becoming great leaders themselves, through offering our ongoing support, criticism and feedback to them, and in holding them accountable. In this way, providing leadership and participating in and following leadership, is a two-way dynamic process.

Junior leaders in an organisation being asked to give regular feedback to senior leaders, provides a culture in which the purpose and demands of providing leadership can be productively explored and examined.

Our building blocks for leadership

“Welcome to the love programme!”

These were the first words spoken by the facilitator welcoming us and introducing her programme focusing on communication. We thought we had come to wrong course. How could a communications course be named “The Love Programme?” What we learned was that the purpose of communication was to communicate love between peoples, communities and nations. Communication wasn’t designed to express hate, prejudice and negativity. Communication is there to make a difference in the world, to promote development and constructive engagement.

Communication, that is, speaking and listening, lies at the very heart of leadership. It is the very expression of leadership, the task of spreading and promoting love between people, communities and nations. This is a key focus area in all of our work with men.



Building blocks

We divide the root word **lead** into four leadership components: **love**, **expression**, **action**, and **development**.

We link each of these building blocks to the four archetypes as described earlier in the chapter “Working with men” (p35).

We work with the concept of **love** as being in harmony with one’s emotions,

embracing the emotions of others, exploring forgiveness, letting go of resentment, showing compassion, looking for the good in others, loving oneself, not having to always please others, and not having to always be liked. This building block links to the archetype of **the lover – the healer**.

We work with the concept of **expression** focusing on creativity and communication, self-expression, getting what's inside outside, valuing one's thoughts and ability to create, sharing oneself with others, and the power of speaking and listening. This building block links to the archetype of **the creator – the magician**.

We work with the concept of **action** putting one's vision, dreams and plans into action, self-realisation, being able to stand up for one's self and for one's beliefs, being decisive and focused. This building block links to the archetype of **the warrior – the activist**.

We work with the concept of **development** focusing on the primary task of leadership, to develop other leaders, assisting others in finding their strengths and developing their talents, inspiring others to make a difference to their families and communities. This building block links to the archetype of **the king – the developer**.

Qualities we look for in leadership

Again using the root word “lead”, when describing the leadership qualities we aim to develop:

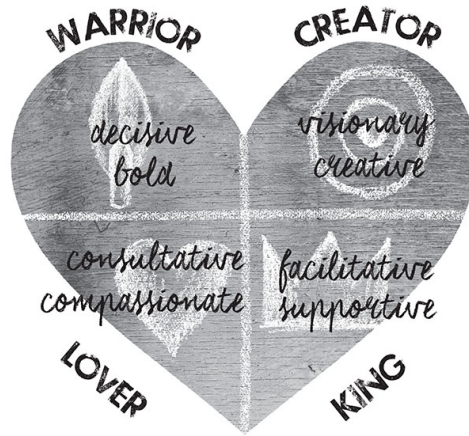
We look for **longevity** in our leaders, focusing on the ability to see things through, being prepared to stay for the long haul, demonstrating commitment, developing stamina, and maintaining belief and motivation. This quality links with the **energy of the king archetype**.

We aim for our leaders to set an **example** by being a role-model to others, finding strategic ways in and ways out of difficult situations, acting with integrity and demonstrating taking responsibility, being consistent, reliable and showing balance. This quality links with the **energy of the lover archetype**.

We require our leaders to be able to function **alone** being able to stand up

and be counted, being prepared to be unpopular when needs be, being able to make tough decisions, to act with authority when required, showing independence, guiding oneself and being self-directed. This quality links with the ***energy of the warrior archetype***.

Our leaders need to be **dynamic**, prepared to change and be flexible, committed to continual growth, being able to accept other ideas and approaches, bringing energy and life to their work, uplifting others and keeping the momentum going; moving from being the cause of a problem to being part of a solution. This quality links with the ***energy of the creator archetype***.



Developing balanced leaders and acknowledging different requirements in leadership

Our aim is always to develop balanced leaders, to focus on developing the many different aspects of leadership:

Visionary and creative: the Creator;

Decisive and bold: the Warrior;

Consultative and compassionate: the Lover;

Facilitative and supportive: the King.

We know these leadership styles are appropriate to different stages in the development of a project or an organisation, for example:

The **start-up phase** needs vision;

The **development phase** requires putting structures in place;

The **consolidation phase** needs the focus to be on building continuity and stability;

Managing crisis and change requires the ability to learn from mistakes, adapt to changing circumstances and overcoming challenges.

Some leaders can move easily through these phases. Some leaders are outstanding at leading during one particular phase (for example, setting up and visioning), but lack the skills to necessarily take an organisation forward to the next phase (for example developing and putting structures in place).

Sometimes a leader is appointed to see a project or organisation through a particular phase. Once this is accomplished, it might be appropriate to have a change in leadership.

Sometimes a team has a **natural balance of leaders**, each with different talents that complement each other's strengths and weaknesses, for example, a visionary balanced by a consolidator. In this sense we have a leadership team in place, rather than relying on one leader to see all phases through.

Different kinds of leadership

We acknowledge that different kinds of leadership are needed to handle varying circumstances and outcomes, for example:

@Leading from the front (very active and hands on);

@Leading alongside (teamwork and delegation of roles);

@Leading from behind (focus on regular supervision and support);

@Providing invisible leadership (background coaching and mentoring).

Different roles required in leadership

When evaluating the performance of a leader, it is useful to have specific criteria identified, regarding the skills, styles and leadership roles required at

any given time. For example: managing, supervising, guiding, generating solutions, problem-solving, conflict resolution, developing systems, training staff, coaching and motivating.

Transition into leadership

From experience we have learned that great care and ongoing support needs to be given when introducing a leader or promoting new leadership. The transition is sometimes difficult to manage from a personal as well as an organisational perspective.

Appointing from within and from without

Looking at creating opportunities for growth and promotion within an organisation is important, as this creates a career and motivational path for staff and team members.

Looking at when it is appropriate to make an outside appointment, due to the dynamics within the organisation, or identified lack of skills or experience needed for a specific job function.

We have had to deal with many issues and challenges in this regard. When appointing from within, we have seen how difficult it is for staff to accept the promotion of one of their peers to a management position, especially in a small organisation, where you can't merely transfer a member to another department, away from their immediate colleagues.

We have experienced how complex it can be to make the transition from a position where you see yourself as an employee, being managed, to being a leader having to take responsibility for direction and decision-making. From merely being one of a team to being the one who is accountable for the results of the team is a tough transition for some individuals to make.

We also realise that men as staff bring with them an employment, family and a life history to work that includes inter-generational stories and experiences of being a worker, or being a manager, of being a receiver of wages, to being a creator of work, of being a representative of staff, to being a leader.

All these factors have to be taken into account when facilitating the process an individual undertakes in moving from being led to becoming a leader,

moving from being a so-called 'worker' to a 'manager'. This transition and the demands that come with it, cannot be underestimated. We have not always been successful in supporting men in this step-up into leadership.

In conclusion some words of reflection from one of our greatest and most inspiring leaders, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela:

Leading as a mission of love

No one is born hating another person because of the colour of their skin, background or religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, then they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

Leading as an example

Yes, I am very angry at what has happened – at what has been done to me and to many others. I acknowledge that. There is nothing wrong with anger. So, angry, yes, but I am not bitter. I make a clear distinction between anger and bitterness. I have grown to realise through my life experience, that bitterness is like a cancer inside, it eats you up and can destroy you. Bitterness produces hate. I decided that I would work against becoming a bitter person, allowing bitterness to consume me.

Leading as a unifying force

Three aspects that form the leitmotif of leadership: the accountability of leaders to citizens,

the fact that we are all leaders in our own right,

and the primacy of unity.

Leaders are the voices of good men and women who exist in all communities and parties, and who define themselves as leaders by their capacity to identify the issues that unite us as a nation.

Leading as inspiration

(Mandela quoting from the poet Ingrid Jonker)

She instructs that our endeavours must be about: “the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man, and the liberty of the child”.

Perhaps “the emancipation of the man” is the greatest leadership task that presents itself in the work of Hearts of Men. We have to see it as inextricably linked to “the liberation of the woman” and to “the liberty of the child”.

Chapter fifteen

EVALUATING THE WORK

In this chapter we cover four key questions we ask when considering evaluation: why we do it, when to do it, how to do it, and who will do it.

Why evaluate?

Checking what is and what isn't working, and identifying why this is so, is a critical part of the development of our work.

In order to keep learning from what we are doing, it is important we continue to ask the question: Is our intervention, is the programme, adding value? If so, how, and if not, why?

Insightful evaluation should benefit all sides of the partnership, the facilitators, the recipients, the policy-makers and the funders.

When to evaluate?

We have often made the mistake of considering evaluation as an afterthought, namely only once we have designed an intervention, funded it, staffed it, planned it and finally started to run it. This mistake is completely understandable, as achieving all the above is more than often, a huge struggle and achievement in itself!

The value of building in a monitoring process right from the start, cannot be underestimated. Identifying the need to evaluate at the very beginning, contributes to the whole process and increases the value of the process itself.

It is empowering to decide before the start what your objectives are, and what you are going to measure in order to monitor your effectiveness, and also how you are going to do this. It is not great having someone else doing it for you at the end, and deciding for themselves, what will be measured to

consider the success or not of your work.

It is extremely difficult to measure at the end, when one has no measurement to begin with, that is no pre-measurement taken before the project, in order to be able to make a comparison.

Evaluating after the fact, at the end of a process, produces minimal benefits for all concerned. Evaluation should be built into the original programme design and budgeted for. This is easier said than done!

After many years of trial and error, we have now learned the good lesson that one of the first questions to be addressed in any design process is: How are we going to evaluate what we do?

Extracts from Hearts of Men external evaluations

Impact

The final question is one that was asked at the beginning of this evaluation: What is success? Will the community be placed on a sounder social footing through the current changes in individual lives, the personal commitment of a small number of people, and the beginnings of an infrastructure? Will the changes that have been identified, last?

Even if not, an impact has undoubtedly been made on specific individuals. A young man has been pointed in the right direction on the road to becoming a man. A man has been inspired to make a difference in the lives of young people. A community has been given hope.

All those involved have been given a 'confessional moment', a chance to stop, to look around, and to see what to do next. In this moment lies the genesis of success of this programme.

Families

It is evident that the young men have been provided with positive male role models. This has been of specific benefit to single-mother households as well as families in which the fathers are mostly absent. In general parents are happy with the programme, they have been touched by the young men's

stories, and indicate that the programme has already made a deep impression. The ceremonies have provided an opportunity for families to welcome, encourage and interact with the young men.

The young men do offer each other peer support, and also hold each other accountable. They are learning to be "a man of your word". They watch over each other. Members of the community have started reporting young men's wrongdoings. This can be seen as a positive sign of success that the programme is slowly taking root in this community.

Mentors

The mentors that have volunteered have done so for a variety of reasons. These include a passion for working with young people, the desire to build a better community, to invest in the lives of the youth in their community, and in some cases to have another chance to contribute to a different child, after a perceived failure with their own son or daughter. For some volunteers, it was the desire to pass on their learning to young men, from mistakes that they as older men have made.

Volunteering on a new initiative takes a lot of courage. Many of the men feared that they might not be successful with the young men and needed to gain confidence in their own ability. Gaining trust and respect, and overcoming resistance, were seen as tough challenges in the mentoring process.

Mentees

Some young men are making use of having a mentor they can go to for assistance and support. They have been given a space to speak, to be heard, a space where they are challenged and confronted, and this is making a noticeable difference.

Many of the young men feel that because of changes they have made, they are being given some recognition by the community, in the form of greetings and less negativity. They are conscious of the expectations of their community. They feel they are now being looked up to. This encourages them to be different. They are utilising leadership skills taught in the programme.

The process

It is crucial to note that the circles are not only about the chance to present one's own stories. Indeed another great enhancement of the experience is the opportunity to learn from listening to other men's stories. In one sense, listening to another man's story facilitates the process of telling one's own story. Listening to others creates an opportunity for men to witness another perspective on issues that are relevant to their own lives.

For instance, a man who is abusing his wife, listens to a story of the damage done to a young man having to witness his father abuse his mother. Similarly a man who is battling with substance abuse, listens to a story told by a man of the damage being done within his family by having to live with an alcoholic. In my own case, I was extremely moved by a man's story of never knowing his own father, since I lost my own father at a very young age.

In all these moments I observed men receiving an additional layer of understanding by being witness to the experiences of those involved on the other side of the same issue.

The entire training process was extremely powerful, providing men with a chance to travel deep inside themselves, and to deal with some of the issues that might prevent them from being effective mentors to the young men. This is a powerful tool for healing and understanding the journey from boys to men.

How we do it?

Four clear steps in our evaluation process

- @ clarifying focus areas of impact;
- @ identifying specific objectives for each area;
- @ deciding how to monitor progress and measure results;
- @ planning to incorporate insights as part of the process.

Step one: Clarifying focus areas of impact

Some interventions have a singular focus, for example, improving literacy levels or managing finances effectively. Other interventions might be multi-focused.

For further info see the chapter “Designing programmes” (p121).

More often than not, a Hearts of Men programme will have several focus areas we would wish to impact, for example:

Four intended areas of impact

- the individual;
- the family;
- the community;
- the environment.

We will then identify specific objectives for the programme, and then assign them to each of these areas of impact. The example given below is from an intervention Hearts of Men designed, partnering with another organisation, which specialises in community gardening and food production.

Step two: Identifying specific objectives for each of the four areas of intended impact

Four key objectives were identified for this programme:

Health; Skills and knowledge; Income generation; Wellbeing.

Specifics were then created for each objective:



Some of these objectives could be assigned to more than one focus area, for

example under Health, regular exercise could be an individual objective, whilst also contributing to the family as a whole. It might also be part of a community initiative, creating larger group activities, exercise for all! Given this example, we would create separate measurements for the individual, the family, and the community, regarding the 'Health' objective of regular exercise.

Step three: Deciding how to monitor progress and measure results

With each of the objectives listed above a pre-measurement would need to be taken. As an example, using the 'Health' objective regular exercise, and focusing on an individual participant, we would need to ascertain the fitness level of the individual, their general state of health, and their current exercise regime.

This would give us a baseline measurement from which we could monitor progress. Their progress levels would be measured against what the individual states as their personal aim under this exercise objective.

For further information see the chapter "Men taking action" (p93).

Depending on the dynamics and resources inherent in a specific situation, we will decide on how we will measure. For example, will we get a fitness or health measurement from anecdotal evidence, meaning, from the person themselves and/or from the man's wife/family? Or will we arrange for a doctor's examination and/or a fitness test?

Apart from a pre-measurement, we have to decide when to measure progress. It could be useful to break down a particular objective into specific targets that would each get measured. The advantage of this approach, rather than just assessing at the very end, is that you can monitor progress and intervene if all is not going well. Stage by stage monitoring also provides encouragement to the participant, if it is acknowledged they are doing well and on the right track in achieving their ultimate aim.

An example still using regular exercise, breaking the ultimate objective down into a series of mini-objectives spread over a three month period:

- walking 3 kms three times a week for a month;

- *walking 5 kms three times a week for a month;*
- *walking 5 kms three times per week on more difficult terrain;*
- *being able to complete a hike up and down Table Mountain.*

In this example we have a clear measurement for each week and each month. We will also have to measure not only whether the participant is achieving the agreed exercise, but also assess how they are coping, in order for possible adjustments to be made.

We will also be specific as to who is gathering, collating and monitoring the results. This style of evaluation could be referred to as inside-out monitoring. The participant is empowered by being part of the evaluation process itself, and not merely being assessed by an outsider observing them.

Step four: Planning to incorporate insights as part of the process

The aim of evaluating is to be in a position to verify if what we are doing is serving its intended purpose: Is it working? It must allow us to improve our methodology and performance. Rather than make improvements for next year's intervention, we can incorporate evaluative insights gained immediately, to the benefit of the current process.

To do this we must see we have in place a structure of communication between all parties involved in the process. Findings must be available to and shared with everyone.

Measurements can be analysed and interpreted in regular reflection, supervision, coaching or mentoring sessions. Adaptations to the intervention can be discussed and agreed upon. These sessions have to be planned and scheduled in at the beginning of the process and not as an afterthought, if we want this ongoing evaluative approach to be beneficial.

It has often been said that regular monitoring actually improves performance in most cases. We are made aware our work is important enough in being continually assessed and we are being encouraged to improve our standard, and we are ultimately being supported in achieving our intended result.

Ongoing evaluation is an effective tool in giving regular encouragement on

the one hand, and also builds in a quick response mechanism when things are not going accordingly to plan.

Who evaluates whom?

First prize is to have everyone involved in the process, in setting up the objectives and creating the measurables. As mentioned above, this gives people a sense of ownership, a feeling of being part of something, and not something being done to them. Having all participants involved in collating information and results – recipients, facilitators and other relevant stakeholders. In this way everyone learns about the process of evaluation and gains skills and insights into the methodology.

The internal evaluation process can benefit by being guided by an outside expert or organisation. It can also benefit from having an outside eye involved in providing the kind of perspective you don't always get when you are working inside a project. So the best scenario would be a combination of both internal and external evaluation working simultaneously and closely together.

As part of the evaluative process, we would encourage all parties to be in a position to give and receive feedback to each other, and from each other:

@participants to facilitators and vice versa;

@funder to recipient and vice versa;

@community to organisation and vice versa;

@participant's family to facilitators and vice versa.

Long-term evaluation

Most of what we are discussing in this chapter refers to short- and medium-term evaluation, meaning, during the initial term of the intervention. What about long-term evaluation of the longer-term effects of a particular intervention? Due to funding criteria and practicalities, most evaluations are once-off and short-term. What is really needed to see a sustainable impact at individual or community level, is to study the situation over many years, in order to obtain a more realistic view.

Let us say for example that some of our intended outcomes in a young men's programme are:

- successful completion of education;
- building stable and loving relationships;
- practising safe, responsible and respectful sex;
- becoming financially independent.

All of these objectives are actually long-term. Our most salient lessons have often occurred when we see what a participant is doing, or how a community or family is progressing, five to 10 years on.

That is where the real learning takes place. Either we learn how naïve we were in hoping the short-term positive effects of an intervention would sustain over a longer period. Or we learn how what we thought was an unsuccessful programme at the time, as it didn't seem to produce immediate results, is talked about and credited years later for a personal shift in an individual's life, something we would never have known at the time.

A huge challenge in longer-term evaluation is also having to take into account other contributing factors, which could influence the results either positively or negatively. Given a long-term perspective, it is interesting to note that with the progress of an individual or a community, the timing of the measurement taken is critical, always keeping other external influencing factors in mind.

Case study of a Hearts of Men participant over a period of ten years

Background

A young man has dropped out of school and is engaging in criminal activity. His father is involved in gang life and is a known drug dealer. The young man is prosecuted for theft, is given a fine and a suspended prison sentence. He now has a criminal record to his name. Hearts of Men starts an intervention in the young man's community.

Step one

Hearts of Men establishes a relationship with the local community high

school, which will host a three-year programme. The young man had attended this school, and the teaching staff identifies him as a student with potential. The Hearts of Men mentor team track him down, encourage and support him to continue his education at his old school.

Step two

He participates in the Hearts of Men Manhood Mentoring programme and receives ongoing support. He becomes a recognised leader within the school and excels in his final matric examination. He gains entry to university.

Step three

He begins his studies at university and starts volunteer work with Hearts of Men, mentoring other young men in his community. He also starts training as a Hearts of Men facilitator. His girlfriend becomes pregnant towards the end of his first year. He suspends his studies and leaves university, to find work in order to support his child.

Step four

Hearts of Men employ him full-time for a year as a community programme facilitator. He splits up with the mother of his child, but stays actively involved with his daughter. At home he is struggling with issues around controlling and expressing his anger. He is also challenged with finding accommodation for himself.

He attends a job interview, is successful and finds full-time employment on a three-year contract as a facilitator with another community-based organisation. He continues his relationship with his girlfriend on and off. They have a second child.

Step five

He starts part-time studies in social work. He begins to facilitate his own youth programme. He wants to get married to the mother of his two children. He makes an application to the Office of the Presidency for the expungement of his criminal record. He has now been 'clean' for the required 10-year period. In order to build a career in the social work sector, he needs to have the criminal record removed from his name.

In requesting letters of support for his application from his previous facilitators

and mentors, he acknowledges the importance of the core principles and learning he obtained, whilst involved in the Hearts of Men programme.

Given this case study, it is an interesting exercise to assess the progress he made at each step of the way over the ten-year period, using the criteria, the four areas of impact, listed earlier in this chapter (p216).

Chapter sixteen

WORKING WITH FUNDERS

Resourcing Hearts of Men's work

This chapter focuses on our experience of, and approach to, working with funders. Sufficient funding is critical to the successful functioning of Hearts of Men. Our financial resources need to complement our other resource areas:

Human resources

People of quality and commitment are essential. We count on paid full-time and part-time, as well as voluntary staff. We need competent managers and good leadership. We need a wide range of skills ranging from financial management, project co-ordination, logistics, community-building, programme facilitation, training to human resource development. We need people with years of experience, and we also need those just beginning their careers with great passion.

See chapter on "Facilitating the work" for more information (p183).

Programme resources

In Hearts of Men we pride ourselves on years of programme design and content creation. The very best people working with poor material, and within an unstructured programme, will most likely produce poor results. Ongoing development of course content and approaches to overcoming delivery challenges are critical to our overall success.

See chapter on "Our men's training" for more information (p83).

Physical resources

Equipment and working space we have needed, have really depended on our specific projects and our logistical requirements, which have varied from time

to time. In Hearts of Men this has included vehicles (as we were working in several regions), outdoor camping equipment and trailer (as we run one of our courses in wilderness areas), a central office from which to coordinate all activities (with computers, phones, furniture and so forth).

Financial resources

Unless we find ways in which to self-generate funds, we will always need to secure outside funding assistance. Funds are critical in order to sustain our human resources (our staff), our programme resources (our delivery) and our physical resources (our equipment/office/vehicles).

Diversification of funding

At Hearts of Men we work with the well-known saying: “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket”. We have always tried our best to diversify our funding, that is, to have as wide a spread as possible of funders representing different sectors.

We have also developed our own funding motto: “Don’t be over-reliant on one funder, or on one funding sector”, for example, on a single government department, or on foreign donors. This is sometimes more easily said than done!

Diversifying our financial support base comes from the need to protect against the withdrawal of one key funder, thus destabilising the whole organisation or delivery process.

As part of this funding philosophy we divide the financial Heart into two sides; government funding and private funding. Both these sides can then be subdivided, meaning, Government into National, Provincial and Local; and Private into International and South African Donors (including corporate funders, foundations and trusts, independent funding bodies and individuals).

The aim is to spread one’s funding strategy as equally as possible across all these sectors.

In our first 14 years of operations, we have received funding from across each of these sectors. Our huge challenge has been to balance the funding. At many times we have been over-reliant on one or two major funders. One

can't always prevent this, but being alert to this not being ideal, keeps us focused and vigilant.

History of Hearts funding 2001 - 2015

Government sector

Provincial

- *Department of Social Development*
- *Department of Community Safety*
- *Department of Agriculture*
- *Department of Education*

Local (UniCity of Cape Town)

- *Department of Community Development*
- *Department of Sport and Recreation*
- *Local Ward Committee grants*

Private sector

International

- *Cordaid (Holland) via Usiko (SA)*
- *Waitrose Foundation (UK)*
- *Individual donations*

South African

- *Community Chest*
- *The Potjie Foundation*
- *Graham Beck Development Trust*
- *The Monteith Trust*
- *The Sophia Foundation*
- *Individual donations and community*

fundraising initiatives

- *Income generation through consultancy work, training and hiring out equipment*

Accountability

How we work with money and account for our expenditure, is critical to the health of our organisation and to the success of our fundraising strategy. Most funders require all of the following to be well in place before agreeing to give financial support.

Regular oversight

We have a management board in place in which the treasurer is required to provide financial oversight. This is done through regular meetings with the Hearts of Men financial manager who manages all day-to-day financial controls, and who reports directly to the Hearts director. Each staff member works within clear mandated budgets with designated line items. All changes or extra expenditure has to be given prior approval by the director and the board.

Annual auditing process

This allows for an external source of oversight through the appointment of an independent auditor. Annual audited financials are submitted to funders on request.

Registration

Hearts of Men is registered with the National Department of Social Development in Pretoria as a Non-Profit Organisation. Annual programme and financial reports are submitted, including any changes in governance (Hearts constitution or board membership and/or office bearers). Hearts is also registered as a Public Benefit Organisation and has tax exemption status through the South African Revenue Service. *(Registration numbers are listed in Appendices on p250)* Hearts of Men is a member of NOSMESA, an

employers' association that provides legal and management advice services.

Reporting

Detailed progress reports, financials and programme evaluations are submitted to the Hearts Board every three months, and to each funder as and when required. The Board has three monthly supervision sessions with the Director (known as the Formal Performance Review process), who does the same with each member of the Hearts of Men Management team.

Securing funding for administration/central office versus funding for programme delivery

A key objective for Hearts of Men has been to secure a funder for the Central Office staff, the Director, Finance manager, Administrator, and Maintenance officer, as well as for their core administration costs, such as insurances, security, vehicle, equipment, building maintenance, utilities, amongst others.

Most funders are far more attracted to support direct programme delivery. This is understandable as that is where we witness the practical work and visible outcomes.

Administration and financial management activities are very much in the background, but ironically if finances and programmes are not well-managed, funders are reluctant to participate. We realise that sound management and accountability are both critical, but sadly they are the most difficult aspects of an organisation to fund.

Hearts of Men has a loyal funder, which supports the central office team. The challenge now is to secure more core administration funding, and not to rely on only one funder for this part of the organisation. Remember the eggs in one basket!

As far as possible we charge a 10% administration fee on each of our programme funding contracts, as a contribution to maintaining the central management team.

When we started as an organisation, nearly all our funds went into delivery. We were a small team, all working from home, and either using our own vehicles or living in the host community. So administration costs were

minimal.

But as we have developed and expanded, working in a variety of settings, and having to manage far higher budgets, extra staff, vehicles and more formal management structures were needed.

The old saying, “small is beautiful” rings true here! Small is also cheaper. We have faced the eternal dilemma and challenge of expansion and growth.

Ironically, funders can put a tremendous demand on an aspect of an organisation that they are not actually funding, namely, central administration. A huge amount of time goes into funding proposal and report-writing, feedback meetings, as well as the required financial management.

Positive versus negative effects of funding

Like many other similar organisations, we have experienced the growing pains of development, which go side by side with increased funding.

Chasing funding

In order to expand operations and create employment opportunities, in a sense we chased funding, rather than following our own programme delivery strategy. What this means in reality is that when a large funder approaches the organisation with an idea and a specific delivery plan, we jump at the opportunity.

We have done this and worked for four years as an outsourced delivery unit of a government department. The advantages to this were job creation, expansion of our work and wider exposure.

There are often disadvantages with a funder-driven approach to organisational and community development. We had to expand too rapidly in order to cope with the delivery demand. We were now committed to working in three different regions. This meant having to procure and maintain a fleet of vehicles, recruit extra staff quickly, set up a new office, design a new programme, and start delivering, all at the same time!

Incorporating too many new staff under such stressful conditions, exposed our lack of a suitably experienced management team and structure. Also,

working with a large governmental department in which decision-making and communication was slow, confusing and sometimes conflictual (with contractual delays affecting contracting staff and delivery targets).

We survived four years of this, but have since decided to take a step back, to reflect and to move from a funder-driven situation, to an organisational and strategy-driven development plan.

Independence versus control versus partnership

Sometimes a funder can exert too much influence on those that they fund. Sometimes organisations are given financial assistance with too little checks and balances in terms of accountability. Neither of these two situations is ideal.

We decided to move from a situation in which we experienced being controlled by our main funder, to regaining our sense of independence as an organisation, whereby we set our own targets, salary scales, recruitment plan, and follow our own strategy.

Ideally, our aim is to work in partnership with our funders, in a mutually beneficial relationship, a win-win situation. The funder would like to put their financial resources to good use, and they look out for a stable and efficient delivery partner, whilst we have a clear vision and a specific delivery aim in mind, and look for a suitable funder to support our work.

Paid work versus volunteering

At a time when we had minimal funding and resources, and relied on a small part-time paid staff team, our volunteer body was large, committed and energised. As we grew into a so-called professional outfit, with proper contracts and salaries, we noticed a decrease in the volunteering aspect within the organisation. It was as if we experienced a significant culture change, from the focus being on volunteering, to being paid.

Volunteers are critical to the success of building men's programmes within communities. We will always need to support key local coordinators with resources, and so forth. Getting the balance right between volunteers and paid staff, and the use of funds is a major challenge.

Working with our funders: the key challenges

Good working relationship

Developing a good working relationship built on trust between the funding body and the recipient organisation is key. Managing this process often requires a high level of skill, experience and good people skills. Some working knowledge in senior management and programme delivery is also recommended. Sometimes we find the funding officer overseeing a project has the same or less experience than the deliverers themselves.

Long-term relationship

Developing a long-term relationship between funder and deliverer in which there is a commitment to see the programme development objectives through. This might suggest a minimum three- to five-year funding cycle. Continuity of funding is critical to staff employment and programme security. It also determines the organisations relationship with its host communities. We build a reputation of seeing things through, not disappearing when the funds dry up before the completion of the process.

Equal partnership

Developing an equal partnership based on mutual respect in which the funder shows respect to the independent organisation, namely, the funder: “Because I hold the purse-strings doesn’t mean I will control you, that I have all the power”, and the recipient: “We will at all time treat your resources with the utmost due diligence and communicate regularly with you.” Ideally, the two parties would have regular feedback sessions, and take mutually beneficial decisions together.

Monitoring and evaluation

Including monitoring and evaluation in the funding agreement. Everyone asks the question: “Is it working?” All funders want to know if their social investment fund is being well spent, and getting the required social return. Far too few funders build this into the funding agreement, and are prepared to

pay for it. In order for proper research and evaluation to take place, the monitoring process must begin well before the planned intervention commences. Too often some evaluation is written up late in a project without any prior research, and prior measurements being taken.

For more on this please refer to the chapter "Evaluating the work" (p211).

The need for funding and the effects of funding

Do we actually need it?

We have seen people doing amazing things without any financial backing. This doesn't mean they can sustain their achievements without the required support. But it does mean that they didn't let the lack of finances stop them in starting with what they wanted to do. That is empowering.

We can't do without it

Sometimes we see people waiting and waiting till the funds arrive before they begin the work on realising their vision. That is disempowering. The power then lies purely with the funder, and not with the inspired individual.

Let's make do without it!

Some very effective people, organisations and communities don't give up what they are doing, when all their attempts at raising funds seem unsuccessful. It's amazing how some people can just make do and persevere.

What will money do to us?

This is a key question to ask. Preparing for funding is very important. Do we run the money? Do we control the money? Or does the money run us? Does the money control us? Too often we see conflicts arising where there has been harmony, when funding enters the working equation. Too often we experience people who were always prepared to give more than what was required, suddenly saying, "I will only do this if you pay me for it."

Will it change us for the better or for the worse?

There is no doubt that the sudden arrival of funding and resources into an area where there has been little or no funding and resources, leads to huge changes in relationship dynamics, attitudes and perspectives. It is very important to prepare for these changes. Getting someone in to assist, who has had experience of managing such a change process, can be hugely beneficial.

The quality of our work

More money doesn't necessarily mean better work or a better result. On reflection, given all the pressures and changes we experienced, we concluded that the quality of our delivery work, our internal staff training processes, our programme management, in many cases deteriorated. In most cases the work done was satisfactory, but we had always prided ourselves on a high standard of programme design and delivery. As detailed above, rapid expansion and working to a funder-determined schedule had both beneficial and detrimental effects on the operations of Hearts of Men.

In the wake of the political transformation, the traditional relationship and resources of meaning between the generations have broken down, and the result is a new generation of township youth, many of whom reject parental authority, regard the streets as their home and armed gangs as their family. Also experiencing extremely difficult economic circumstances, the problems of alienated youth have increased exponentially.

Allan Kaplan (The Development Practicioners' Handbook)

A HEARTS OF MEN INSTITUTE

Overall vision and purpose

To create a centre of excellence that focuses on the wellbeing of families and communities.

In practice

In order to achieve this, Hearts of Men will establish an institute that focuses on facilitation training, programme design, resource development, research and evaluation, as well as the creation of strategic partnerships.

We have divided the above vision into four strategic components. The accomplishment of these smaller visions will together contribute to the realisation of the overall vision for Hearts of Men.

Vision 1

To facilitate the creation of men's training and support circles, in as many communities as possible, throughout South Africa.

In practice

In order to achieve this Hearts of Men will develop strategic partnerships with other related NGOs and specific government departments – locally, provincially and nationally. Hearts of Men's key role will be to inspire communities to participate in this initiative, to provide the necessary training input, and to offer ongoing mentoring to ensure sustainability in all aspects of the work, such as facilitating, managing, financing, recruiting, amongst others.

Vision 2

To strengthen families, by turning men back towards the home, as well as by actively including women in the process.

In practice

In order to achieve this, Hearts of Men will provide specific training and ongoing mentoring services which focuses on strengthening relationships within the family, sustaining marriages, and effective parenting for men and women.

Vision 3

To strive for ongoing improvement and development.

In practice

In order to achieve this, Hearts of Men will undertake research in the field of men's work and community-based interventions, and implement evaluation processes in order to guide the development of new approaches and methodologies, and to influence all Hearts of Men programme design work on an ongoing basis.

Vision 4

To substantially increase the awareness of Hearts of Men's work, and to expose Hearts of Men practical resources, training and intervention strategies, to as wide an audience as possible.

In practice

In order to achieve this, Hearts of Men will promote its practical experience through strategic networking, specific marketing, producing resources, and disseminating information, thus taking a lead in putting men's programmes and family interventions on the national stage.

Success breeds success

Success stories are extremely important to us. Especially in the light of the extreme conditions and challenges our volunteer mentors are operating within. Success inspires our mentors and gives them hope, in order to continue with their tough work in turning young men's lives around. An example from one of our community programmes stands out.

The local high school that we were in partnership with, identified two learners who were no longer attending school. They were both the children of well-known drug dealers also involved in gang activity. The teachers felt these two young men had real potential if they could be persuaded to return to school, and could receive regular support from other men in the community.

To cut a long story short: The mentors were successful in recruiting them into the Hearts of Men programme. The outcome was that they both achieved good academic results, and one of the young men was appointed as head boy of the school. After matriculation both were accepted at university and received study grants.

For us this was a profound achievement: from two young men wandering the streets as school dropouts to eventual university entry. This proved to us the power of strategic mentorship and ongoing support structures organised at community level.

APPENDICES

Authors' CVs

Nic Fine

Nic Fine was born in Cape Town in 1953, went to school at Wynberg Boys' High and university at Stellenbosch majoring in English, Political Philosophy and Sociology. He then lived, worked and trained in the UK and USA for 18 years, where he was involved in juvenile justice, conflict resolution, mediation, youth development and community work. He returned to South Africa in 1997.

He specialised in designing and facilitating group work training programmes and projects for young people at risk, as well as for staff who work with them, in the community, education, probation and prison services. He has done consultancy work for numerous organisations and educational institutions both in SA and abroad.

Nic has written and contributed to several publications relating to youth, adult and community development:

He co-authored *Playing with Fire (PWF)* for Leap Confronting Conflict, published by National Youth Agency/Youth Work Press UK, (1992). *PWF* was later translated and published in Croatia and Russia. *PWF* was republished by New Society Publishers in USA and Canada (1995). *PWF* was updated and republished in 2011 by Jessica Kingsley Publishers UK and USA.

Co-authored *Fireworks* for Leap Confronting Conflict, published by National Youth Agency/Youth Work Press, UK (1992).

Authored *Through the Walls* published by Community Law Centre/University of the Western Cape (1996).

Co-authored *Cooking up Community* published by Change Moves, Cape Town (2003).

Co-authored *From Violence to Resilience* for Leap Confronting Conflict published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers UK/USA (2011).

Also contributed chapters to *Burning Issues* (Leaveners Press/Leap CC, London 1993), *Arts Approaches to Conflict* (JKP – UK/USA 1996), *Perspectives on Violence* (Howard League/Quartet Books – London 1994), and to *Law, Practice and Policy – SA Juvenile Justice Today* (CLC/UWC 1995).

Nic co-founded Hearts of Men in 2001. He currently lives in Cape Town with his wife, Rebecca, and their two sons, Dylan and Jacob.

Des van Niekerk

Des van Niekerk, was born in Cape Town in 1968 and attended Parkwood High School (later renamed Lotus High). He is a co-founder of Hearts of Men. Des has been married for 27 years to his childhood sweetheart, Amelia, and is a proud father of three sons.

He has a passion for working with men and for restoring their families. He has authored numerous Training Resources, including “The Fatherhood Manual”, co-authored “Building Bridges” with the Medical Research Council, and the Community Centre’s “Life Skills” manual for the Unicity of Cape Town. Des has set up a number of men’s programmes in both rural and urban communities throughout South Africa.

After a few years of working in business with costing and budgeting, shop floor design and stock-taking to HR, Des left the world of commerce to get involved in social justice initiatives and joined a government department working with youth in places of safety. After completing a diploma in Child and Youth Care, Des went on to complete his Honours Degree in Theology. It was during this time that he designed and facilitated life skills and leadership courses for Youth at Risk inside detention facilities as well as mainstream youth at high schools around Cape Town.

Because of his keen interest in youth and community development, he wanted to see how youth would move from a position of displacement to where they can take ownership of their own development. Des designed and tested the “Tough Enough” life skills programme over a seven-year period in both institutions and other sectors to see the viability of this work, from public schools to NGOs and churches. The core idea was to do preventative work by capacitating youth and keeping them out of the juvenile justice system.

Des later joined a team of facilitators that started a mentoring programme on the Cape Flats; this saw the birth of Hearts of Men.

HEARTS OF MEN

Personnel

The early years

Founding members: Des Van Niekerk, Lionel Arnolds and Nic Fine.

Staff members: Nolan Abrahams, Solomon Marlow, Derek Abrahams, Patrick Macqueen, Nico Beukes, Christopher Kemp, Willie April, Shaun Phillips, Mzi Noji and Fernando Hendricks.

Key volunteers: Neil Willemse, Danzil Hess, Ashley Isaacs, Mark Dodgen, Mike Abrams, David Rossouw, Andre Daniels, Alliston Fortuin, Deon Slaai and Magadien Wentzel.

Later years working from Strand Central Office

Staff members: Shaun Phillips, Nolan Abrahams, Jason Carew, Jerome Damonse, Vanecia Briesies, Solomon Marlow, Michael Fingers, Mzi Noji, Fernando Hendricks. Ayanda Mfanekiso, Richard Kloosman, Cheslyn Kemp, Marilyn Kruger, Raymond Fredericks, Geduld Veldsman, Armien Taylor, Randall Pietersen, John Petersen, Norman Wilson, Celeste Stuurman, Juney Hartnick and Des van Niekerk.

Key volunteers: Nico Beukes, Errol Mathews, Kobus Pietersen, Llewellyn Rule, Charles Pietersen, Rubin Dames, Ferguson Oppelt, Faiz Neetling, Tjiki Kobeni, Sheldon Conradie, Renaldo Moses, Moses Plaatjies, Ricardo Nelson, Nico Januarie, Joseph Visser and Jeffrey Petersen.

Board Members

Founding Hearts Board: Nic Fine (Chairperson), Arthur Benjamin, Fayruz Davids, Lionel Arnolds and Des van Niekerk.

Additional members who have served on the Hearts Board: Ossang Hilaire Akollo, William Elliott, Heinrich Briesies, David Jackson and Fairzoza

Brey.

Communities, organisations and schools with whom Hearts of Men has served or partnered

Communities

City of Cape Town & Western Cape:

Cape Flats – Bonteheuwel (Netreg/Golden Gate, Bluegum, Kalksteenfontein), Guguletu, Manenberg.

South Peninsula – Ottery East, Lotus River, Grassy Park, Kenilworth.

Helderberg – Strand, Macassar, Eerste Rivier, Sir Lowry's Pass.

Overberg – Grabouw, Vyeboom farming community, Monteith Farms.

Langeberg – Robertson, Graham Beck Farms, Randrivier Farm, Rouxvale Farm, Goudmyn, Ashton, Barnardsplaas, Montagu, Bonnievale.

Organisations

ACVV (Ashton, Strand, Montagu, Robertson, Villiersdorp), Badisa (Strand), Graham Beck Development Trust Skills Centre, Child Welfare (Somerset West, Robertson, Bonnievale, Grabouw), Die Vangnet (Bonnievale), Afrika Tikkun (Mfuleni), The Parent Centre, FAMSA, USIKO, Medical Research Council/SAPPRU – SCRATCHMAPS, Mosaic, Herberg Kinderhuis (Robertson), Robertson Clinic Youth Project, Silver Threads Service Centre (Ashton), Heidiland Pre-School Centre (Ashton), VGK Church (Ashton), Centre of Hope (Montagu), AFM Church (Bonnievale), LSAAG (Langeberg Region), The Trauma Centre, Direct Action Centre for Peace and Memory, Change Moves, Educo (all Cape Town), USIKO Jamestown.

Schools

Klipfontein Primary, Modderdam High (both Bonteheuwel), Bishop Lavis High, Kalksteenfontein Primary, Stephen Road Primary, De Duine Primary, Zeekoevlei Primary, Lotus High, Grassy Park High, Macassar Secondary School, Strand Secondary School, Rusthof Secondary (Strand), Dr. DG Joubert Primary School (Strand), Vergesig Primary School (Robertson), Langeberg Secondary School, Hugenot Primary School, De Villiers Primary School (all Robertson), Ashton Secondary School, H Venter Primary School

(both Ashton), Michael Oak High School (Kenilworth).

Local/Provincial Government

South African Police Service (Strand, Ashton, Robertson, Bonnievale), The Langeberg Municipality, Department of Social Development (Grabouw, Villiersdorp, Ashton, Bonnievale, Eerste River, Somerset West).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge all the above-mentioned individuals, communities and organisations who have staffed, volunteered and contributed to the work of Hearts of Men.

Also a huge thanks and appreciation to all those unnamed older and younger men who have taken part in our programmes as volunteer participants, mentors and mentees. At the end of the day this work is all about you.

We would also like to give thanks to

Earlich Erasmus, Warren Conradie, and the late Coleridge Daniels – Educo;
Anthony Daniels – Department of Community Development (City of Cape Town);

Mike Abrams – Change Moves;

Ronnie Simons and Casta Kaleni – Afrika Tikkun

Alfred Gough, Anthony Daniels, Faiz Neetling, Iracema Hromnik, Matthew Cohen & Alliston Fortuin for their written contributions & programme evaluations.

Carel, Emile, Nicola and Steven – former design students at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, for their work on developing the Hearts of Men logo and ‘man holding heart’ illustration.

Richard Kloosman for adapting the ‘Institute’ logo.

All our funders from 2001 to 2014 (they are listed in the final chapter “Working with funders” on p228) .

The Legal Resources Centre Cape Town Office (the late Kobus Pienaar) for legal and organisational support services.

The Stonehage Cape Town Office for financial, tax and funder network support services.

Nic Fine would personally like to acknowledge and thank the following people and organisations for their contributions and partnership

The ‘Coming of Age/Moving into Manhood’ (programme for young men) staff team 2003–2014:

Volunteer fathers/parents of Michael Oak High School: Gonzalo Aguilar, Clive Levin, Heinrich Langner, Roy Davids, Simric Yarrow, Chris Berens, Peter van Heerden, Ronnie Simons, Matthew Reid, Ross Suter and Brian Heydenrych. Former students who have volunteered: Gabriel Hope and Ayanda Mfanekiso. Volunteer men from outside Michael Oak school: Phil van Zyl, William Elliott, Solomon Marlow, Michael Heuerman, Des van Niekerk, Mzi Noji, Mike Abrams and Ossang Hilaire Akollo. The Michael Oak High School Faculty and College of Teachers. The volunteer mothers/parents who have staffed on the ‘Coming of Age/Roots & Wings’ programme for young women.

USIKO 2001–03:

Programme development team: Phil van Zyl, Gavin Robinson, William Elliott, John Neave and Colin Campbell. Management Board members: Don Pinnock, Andrew Muir, Tony Naidoo, Marion Goodman and Peter Henochsberg (Administrator).

NICRO National Office 2000–01: Soraya Solomon, Rosie Shapiro and Lukas Muntingh.

Open Society Foundation 2002: Cheryl Frank.

Community Law Centre (University of the Western Cape) 1995–96: Professors Nico Steytler & Julia Sloth-Nielsen.

Community Development Resource Association 2001: Doug Reeler

UK/USA-based colleagues/organisations:

Fiona Macbeth, Jo Broadwood, Rene Manradge, Alec Davidson, Helen Carmichael, Steve McReadie, Amaragita Pearce, Ben Rose, John Bergman, Steve Angell, Ron Bynam, Neil Wragg, Clinton Tyrell, Kimmet Edgar, Karin Fry, Mark Bitel, Youth at Risk UK, Leap Confronting Conflict, Geese Theatre Company, Alternatives to Violence Project USA & UK, Feltham YOI, Breakthrough Foundation USA and Landmark Education UK.

Des van Niekerk would personally like to thank and acknowledge the following people who have played a significant part in his family and working life

My father, Japhta C van Niekerk, AA Coetzee, Keith Hart, Alfred Harris, Charles Harris, Michael Leak, Keith Balie, Rick Moses, Jeffrey Cooper and Gerald Maasdorp.

We would like to remember and acknowledge all those Hearts of Men staff and participants who have passed on since our inception in 2001.

READING REFERENCE LIST

Some literature we recommend:

Manhood – An action plan for changing men's lives – by Steve Biddulph (Finch Publishing. ISBN 0-646-26144-4)

The Power of a Praying Husband – by Stormie Omartian (Harvest House. ISBN 978-0-7369-1976-0)

Raising Boys – Why boys are different. How to help them become happy and well-balanced men – by Steve Biddulph (Harper-Collins. ISBN 0-7225-3686-0)

Courageous Parenting – Raising a committed Christian family – by Jack and Deb Graham (Christian Art. ISBN 978-1-86920-689-5)

DAD – The power and beauty of authentic fatherhood – by Craig Wilkinson (DAD Books. ISBN 978-0-620-57131-9)

Edge of the Table – Fourteen Cape Flats Youths tell their life-stories –by Edited by Cara-Lee Arendse and Shirley Gunn (Human Rights Media Centre. ISBN 978-0-620-49119-8)

From Violence to Resilience – Transformative programmes to grow young leaders –by Nic Fine and Jo Broadwood (Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN 978-1-84905-184-2)

Gangs, Rituals and Rites of Passage by Don Pinnock (African Sun Press. ISBN 1-874915-08-3)

Daddy Come home – Rediscovering the importance of Fatherhood – by Zane Meas (Struik Christian Books. ISBN978-1-4153-0934-6)

Playing with Fire – *Training for those working with young people in conflict* – by Nic Fine, Fiona Macbeth, Jo Broadwood and others (Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN 978-1-84905-184-2)

Of Water and the Spirit – Ritual, magic and initiation in the life of an African shaman – by Malidoma Patrice Some (Penguin Compass. ISBN 0-14-01.9496-7)

Prodigals – Words of encouragement for those that wait – by Ruth Bell Graham (Baker Books. ISBN 978-0-8010-7155-3)

From Boys to Men – *Spiritual rites of passage in an indulgent age* – by Bret Stephenson (Park Street Press. ISBN 978-1-59477-140-8)

Spots of a Leopard – *On being a man and the meaning of manhood in Africa* – by Aernout Zevenbergen (Laughing Leopard Publications. ISBN 978-0-620-43311-2)

Reclaiming Youth at Risk – *Our hope for the future* – by Larry K. Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg and Steve Van Bockern (National Education Service. ISBN 1-879639-05-X)

Daai Ding – *Sex, sexual violence and coercion in men's prisons* – by Sasha Gear and Kindiza Ngubeni (Centre for the Study of Violence and Rconciliation. 2002)

The Roaring of the Sacred River – *The wilderness quest for vision and self-healing* – by Steven Foster and Meredith Little (Lost Borders Press . ISBN 0-13-781445-3)

Bringing up Boys – *Practical advice and encouragement for those shaping the next generation of men* – by Dr James Dobson (Christian Art. ISBN 1-86852-892-8)

The Book of the Vision Quest – *Personal transformation in the wilderness* – by Steven Foster and

Meredith Little (Island Press. ISBN 0-933280-03-3)

Wild at Heart – Discovering the secret of a Man's soul - by John Eldredge (Thearts of Menas Nelson Inc. ISBN 978-1-4002-8102-2)

Bound by Honour – Fostering a great relationship with your teen – by Gary and Greg Smalley (Tyndale Books. ISBN 1-56179-653-0)

Working with Men – To end gender-based violence – by Nicol Colling and Interfund team (Interfund 2004)

Working with Gangs and Young People – A toolkit for resolving group conflict by Jessie Feinstein and Nia Imani Kuumba (Leap Confronting Conflict/Jessica Kingsley Publishers. ISBN 1-843-10-447-4)

Biology of Belief – Unleashing the power of consciousness, matter and miracles – by Bruce H. Lipton, PHD (Hay House Inc. ISBN 978-1-4019-2312-9)

Positive Peer Culture – For social, child and youth services – by Harry Vorrath and Larry Brendtro (Aldine De Gruyter. ISBN 0-202-36038-5)

Adolescence – The survival guide for parents and teenagers – by Elizabeth Fenwick and Dr Tony Smith (Dorling Kindersley. ISBN 0-7513-0033-0)

Cooking up Community – Facing challenges in community-building for transformation – by Mike Abrams and Nic Fine (Change Moves. ISBN 0-620-30621-1)

Boys will be Boys – Breaking the link between masculinity and violence – by Myriam Miedzian (Virago Press Limited. ISBN 1-85381-466-0)

The Development Practitioners' Handbook – Developing the individual, organisation, community and society – by Allan Kaplan (Community Development Resource Association/Pluto Press ISBN 0-7453-1020-6)

The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook – Strategies and tools for building a learning organisation – by Peter Senge and others (Currency Doubleday ISBN 0-385-47256-0)

DEDICATION

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela 1918 -2013

“If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy – and then he becomes your partner”

In the hearts of men is dedicated to Nelson Mandela, our first democratically elected President. We began writing our book in the final year of his life, and are completing it a year later, as we mark the first anniversary of his passing. He inspired us through his leadership, and we honour the sacrifices he made as a family man, a father and husband.

“If I had my time over I would do the same again, so would any man who dares call himself a man”

(From Nelson Mandela's closing speech to the court after his conviction in Pretoria, 7th November 1962.)

Closing statement – January 2023

After 22 years of programme delivery, mentoring and resource publishing, it is time for us to close Hearts of Men, and in so doing hand over our work and experience to the next generation of community workers and programme facilitators. We have placed our books and manuals on open access sites for free use.

As individuals, we will still mentor and support when requested to do so. But as an organisation, with all our work and experience now well documented, we feel we have fulfilled our mission.

Everything has a beginning,

And everything has an end.

When something ends,

It makes way for something new to be created.

And so now, we pass on to the next generation,

With the final words, 'Just do what you can!'

Hearts of Men publications:

We have placed our books and manuals on open access sites for free use.

In the Hearts of Men – 2015

The Manhood Experience Parts One & Two – 2017

The Wild at Heart Adventure & Appendices – 2017

Generation to Generation – 2022

For queries concerning any of the above:

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